Miss Ellis's Mission

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MISS ELLIS'S MISSION.

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MISS ELLIS'S MISSION.

BY

MARY P. W. SMITH.

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TO

POST-OFFICE MISSION WORKERS,

WEST AND EAST,

AND TO EARNEST PEOPLE

EVERYWHERE.

"It was a very contemptible barley-loaf she had to offer, compared with your fine, white, wheaten cake of youth and riches and strength and learning; but remember she offered her best freely, willingly, faithfully; and when once a thing is offered, it is no longer the little barley-loaf in the lad's hand, but the miraculous satisfying Bread of Heaven in the hand of the Lord of the Harvest, more than sufficient for the hungry multitude."

. . . . . .

"'And so there is an end of poor Miss Toosey and her Mission!' . . . Wait a bit! There is no waste in nature, science teaches us; neither is there any in grace, says faith. We cannot always see the results, but they are there as surely in grace as in nature."

MISS TOOSEY'S MISSION.

MISS ELLIS'S MISSION.

THIS little sketch of Miss Ellis's life and work owes its first suggestion to Rev. J. Ll. Jones, of Chicago, who soon after her death wrote: "Why not try for a little memorial of her, to be accompanied with some of the most touching and searching extracts from the letters both received and written by her, and make it into a little booklet for the instruction of Post Office Mission Workers? . . . Can you not make it something as touching as 'Miss Toosey,' and far more practical, — that is, for our own little household of faith? . . . We do not want it primarily as a missionary tool, but as a wee fragment of the spiritual history of the world, — something that will lift and touch the soul of everybody. . . . In short, give us an enlightened Miss Toosey; her mission being as much stronger as Sallie Ellis was more rational and mature than the original 'Miss Toosey'!"

No one knowing Miss Ellis could read the touching little story of "Miss Toosey's Mission" without being struck by a resemblance in the characters, though a resemblance with a marked difference. As one said, "I never saw her going up the church aisle Sundays, with her audiphone, her little satchel, her bundle of books and papers, and her hymn-book, without thinking of Miss Toosey." In both lives a seemingly powerless and insignificant personality, through the force of a great yearning to do a bit of God's work in the world, achieved its longing far beyond its fondest dreams. As I read the many letters from all over the country that have come since Miss Ellis's death, as I realize how the spiritual force that burned in the soul of this small, feeble, seemingly helpless woman reached out afar and touched many lives for their enduring ennoblement, her life, so meagre and cramped in its outward aspect, so vivid and intense within and on paper, seems to me not without a touch of romance. To perpetuate a little longer the influence of that life is the object of this sketch.

Sallie Ellis was born in Cincinnati, March 13, 1835. The old-fashioned name Sallie, at that time popular in the South and West, was

given her in honor of an aunt. She disliked sailing under the false colors of "Sarah." In letters she usually signed herself "S. Ellis," because, as she explained to one correspondent, "I do not know myself as *Sarah*, and Sallie is not dignified enough in writing to strangers; so I usually prefer plain S." Late in life, however, for reasons of dignity, she sometimes felt forced to adopt Sarah as what she called her "official signature."

Her father, Mr. Rowland Ellis, was born in Boston, but while yet young removed to Cincinnati, where he still lives in a vigorous and honored old age. Although his mother, in all her later years at least, was a devoted attendant upon Theodore Parker's services, Mr. Ellis in early life was a Baptist. But when the Unitarian Church was founded at Cincinnati, in 1830, his name appears among the organizers, of whom he is almost the sole survivor. Of that church he has always been a devoted supporter and constant attendant. He was a leading banker of the West, and Sallie was born into one of the most elegant and luxurious homes in Cincinnati. The Ellises kept open house, exercised the most generous hospitality, and made, as one says who knew them well then, "such a beautiful use of their money. The Ellises were just the people who *ought* to have

money." Mrs. Ellis is described as a woman of unusual loveliness of character. Out of the eight children, Sallie was thought to be the mother's favorite, because, it was supposed, she was always puny, shy, and delicate. "Sallie shall always have what she wants," said the mother, "because she wants so little." But mothers *know*, and undoubtedly the mother saw deeper than others into the rare spiritual quality concealed from the world under her delicate child's quiet, reserved exterior. Her older sister remembers of Sallie's childhood: "As a very young child she exhibited strongly marked peculiarities of character. Her affection, conscientiousness, piety, and love of duty made her different from the rest of us as children. I remember well that at home or at school there were never any rebukes for Sallie. Though very social by nature, as young as at five and six years of age she loved to be alone, and would sit in the corner of her mother's room, with face turned to the corner, musing, and talking in a low tone to her doll. When our father and mother would take the children to entertainments of various descriptions, such as children enjoy, Sallie would invariably express her preference to remain at home. If she thought her parents wanted her to go, she went."

For some years Sallie attended the private school of Mrs. Anne Ryland, an English Unitarian (a former parishioner, I think, of Rev. Laut Carpenter, and connected by marriage with Rev. Brooke Herford), a lady of noble character, and a teacher whose culture and methods were in advance of her age. In a volume of poetry presented Sallie by this teacher, is this inscription, whose old-fashioned quaintness of phrase pictures for us the Sallie Ellis of thirteen, then, as always, faithful to duty.

"Mrs. Ryland has been much gratified by the general deportment of Miss Sallie Ellis since she has been under her charge. Miss Ellis has evinced an evident desire to please, by a strict observance of the rules of the school, and by assiduous and persevering attention to all her studies. She has made improvement in them all fully commensurate with her laudable endeavors, in Grammar, Geography, and Orthography particularly. It is with unfeigned regret that Mrs. Ryland has to add, to the foregoing expression of her approval of her dear pupil's conduct, the last word, — Farewell."

Later, she attended the private school of Rev. William Silsbee, who says of her, "She was always studious and well-behaved, one of the most faithful of all my pupils." Mr. M. Hazen White,

for so many years superintendent of the Unitarian Sunday school, was also one of her teachers. When seventeen, she was sent to Mrs. Charles Sedgwick's school, in Lenox, Mass. A schoolmate describes her then as a quite pretty, black-eyed girl, of delicate physique, a good and studious but not brilliant scholar, very quiet and retiring, and almost morbidly reserved. The few friends she made here, however, were life-long, and she corresponded with some of the Lenox schoolmates until her death. "She was a perfect dancer," says the schoolmate.

Treasured among Miss Ellis's papers were found some pages of a schoolgirl's album, marked, "At Mrs. Sedgwick's School, Lenox, Mass., March, 1852." It contains verses descriptive of each pupil, written apparently by Mrs. Sedgwick. The little pen-picture of the schoolgirl paints well the woman of later years.

SALLIE ELLIS.

If device for an old Latin motto were asked,
No invention would need to be very much tasked;
For the "multum in parvo" *you* safely might stand,
With book, needle, or pen, ever found in your hand.
A little, wee body with strong, earnest will,
That steadily works with the force of a mill;

A mind quite untiring, whatever it do,
Its manifold ends with good heed to pursue:
Hands busy and strong play deftly their part,
And these all controlled by a good, honest heart.

Bright indeed looked Sallie's future in those days. A year or two more at school, then a return to the loved mother and the beautiful home, and a "coming out" into the brilliant world with all the advantages attending wealth and position. But the clouds were already gathering which in coming years were to darken for her in quick succession the sunshine of earthly prosperity. She was called home from school by the illness of her mother. The mother died, leaving Sallie the oldest daughter at home, to fill her place as best she might to five little brothers and sisters.

Her sister says: "Our dear mother's death was the turning-point in Sallie's life. She was so shrinking, sensitive, and tender by nature, no one could fully understand her but a mother who had watched the hidden beauties of her character expand from infancy to girlhood."

The mother's memory was fondly cherished, her loss deeply mourned, all Miss Ellis's life. Over the dying bed of the worn and weary woman of fifty smiled down the radiant face of the mother, painted when a young, blooming girl. Among

Miss Ellis's papers was found a manuscript volume of eighty-one pages of selections, copied in her clear, firm handwriting, index of the spirit's strength. It is headed, "Crumbs of Comfort for the Afflicted." The selections are from the Bible, sermons, hymns, and poems, — all breathing of religious trust and help in grief, — a beautiful and touching collection. The first page reads, —

"Begun in Nov. 1870.

"These selections are made in memory of my dear mother, who was called away many years since, and through whose death I was led to think of a higher life, — the *true* life of the soul.

"'Oh, I believe there is no *away;* that no love, no life, goes ever from us; it goes as He went, that it may come again, deeper and closer and surer, and be with us always, even unto the end of the world' (*Patience Strong's Outings*)."

One of the selections is an anonymous poem, "The Strength of the Lonely." On one page Miss Ellis had written (signed "S. E."), "I can but believe that God allows a mother still to watch over and care for her family when he takes her from this world, and in our affliction that he draws us to himself, and to Jesus as our guide to him, through her spiritual influence, just as, while upon earth, he permitted her to be his

instrument to lead and guide us in all that is good. All children too, even the youngest, are God's instruments for good, and their ministries cease not with their earthly life. The departed are with us everywhere, through our daily duties, —

"In the loneliest hour, in the crowd, they are nigh us."

A year or two after the mother's death Sallie joined the Unitarian Church, being baptized by Rev. A. A. Livermore, of whom she writes in a letter: "Rev. A. A. Livermore was settled here from the time I was fourteen to twenty-one, and he formed my religious character." Fitting indeed was it that he who has trained so many young men for the ministry should dedicate to God's service this young woman, also destined to be his minister to many souls. An old lady in the church remembers seeing Sallie go up to be baptized, leading a little brother by each hand, all the little children being baptized at the same time. To one of her nature, the vows then taken were a most sacred, real consecration of her whole self to God, — vows to be nobly fulfilled in the life.

Mr. Livermore writes of her: —

"During my pastorate of the Unitarian Church in Cincinnati, Mr. and Mrs. Rowland Ellis were valued

parishioners of mine, and their children were all baptized by me. It was a lovely group of little folks, and the spirit of that consecration has gone largely through all their lives, and given them, I believe, the Christian flavor. They have, too, been very warmly united as a family, and in health and sickness, in life and death, they have borne strong testimony to the blessed anchorage of a positive religious faith.

"They were also diligent attendants on the Sunday school in the basement of the old church. Sallie's bright face and upright attitude was to be seen in her place as sure as the Sunday came.

"After I left Cincinnati I saw her but seldom, but on those occasions she always spoke of the earlier times in the church and the Sunday school with a warmth and glow of memory that showed that they had been real points of life to her mind and character. And especially after her deafness became a chastening hand laid upon her character, and family sorrows and bereavements followed in the train, it was plain that she found her religious trust the one thing needful."

Within another year business reverses swept away Mr. Ellis's entire fortune. As he had meantime married a lady who proved a most capable and devoted mother to the younger children, Sallie, released from domestic cares, felt that she ought to do something to assist her father. "She was so modest," says a friend, "I don't think it ever occurred to her that she could teach

school. But she said there was one thing she knew she could do, and do well, and that was, to dance." So Miss Sallie became a dancing-teacher, having classes of children in their mothers' parlors.

Another friend (whose boys, now stalwart men in the church, were among Miss Ellis's pupils) says of her: "She was a lovely dancing-teacher. She not only taught the children to dance well, but she taught them such gentle, lovely manners. Indeed, the significant thing in Miss Ellis's life, to me, was her faithfulness. Whatever her hand found to do, she did, and did well. Because she had been so faithful at dancing-school, she was able to be so successful a teacher. Because, when taught sewing, she tried so hard to do her best, she became such a beautiful sewer, and was able to teach sewing;" for a sewing-class was another expedient of those days.

Her father moved to Chicago in 1851, where he resided three years. There Miss Ellis attended Mr. Shippen's church, taught a Sunday-school class, and had a class of newsboys evenings. After the return to Cincinnati, while Miss Ellis was at the sea-shore, she began to experience a painful roaring in the ears. Hearing, never quite perfect, was soon almost totally

gone. The following years are little, to outward sight, but a record of invalidism, of trying this or that doctor, but still ever decreasing health and strength. Many dyspeptics, from Carlyle to lesser folk, have felt their disease, like charity, a cover for a multitude of sins. Miss Ellis suffered from chronic dyspepsia of aggravated type, from catarrhal and other troubles which finally wore away the always frail thread of life in consumptive decline.[1]

But through all these hard years Miss Ellis was doing what she could, and longing to do more. Until deafness prevented, she always taught in Sunday school. She was a devoted attendant on all church services, and worker in all church causes. The perfection of her handiwork made it in great demand. Knowing now Miss Ellis's possibilities, one almost grudges the Unitarian children, and the innumerable but beloved little nephews and nieces, the years of "Aunt Sallie's" life that went into dainty embroidery and perfect mittens for their wearing.

[1] The death of two brothers, of a dear little niece, and of a fondly loved sister, — a woman beloved by all who knew her, who died only about a year before Miss Ellis, leaving five motherless girls — were among the trials of her maturer years.

The church fairs were always liberally aided by her willing hands. Indeed, it is difficult, without seeming exaggeration, to express her passion of devotion to her church. It was literally her life. Outside her family, to which she was warmly attached, everything centred for her there, and for many years one of her heaviest crosses was her inability to render the service she desired to her church and denomination.

The portrait prefacing this book was taken in 1871, when Miss Ellis was thirty-six years old, — perhaps the saddest period in her life. Youth, health, fortune, hearing, dear friends, had gone one after another. The future looked dark indeed. She felt within herself capacities for which there seemed no earthly opportunity. The face wears a sadder expression than that characterizing it in later life, when at last she had found her real work.[1]

Rev. Charles Noyes was settled as Unitarian pastor in Cincinnati in 1872. To him Miss Ellis always attributed her first missionary impulse.

In a letter to Rev. W. C. Gannett, July 28, 1885, she said: —

[1] The kindness of Mr. Frank R. Ellis, of Cincinnati, Miss Ellis's youngest brother, enables us to place the portrait in this book.

"Yes, it is a *great* source of comfort to have started the 'good seed,' and now to see so many stronger people taking up the work and doing so much better than I. A great deal is due to dear Mr. Charles Noyes. He won me by his kind heart while here, and was so kind in lending me his manuscripts always, and books, that he kept me along with the religion of the day. Then Mr. Wendte furthered the matter by putting me on the Missionary Committee, and finally started me out with the 'Pamphlet Mission.' You know the rest."

In her diary was a copy of a letter written Mr. Noyes on his departure from Cincinnati, dated June 23, 1875, a portion of which is here given.

"I cannot say 'so be it' to your departure without returning thanks for the many pleasant hours you have afforded me through your manuscripts, the books and papers you have so kindly lent me from time to time. You have given me something to think about for a long time, so I can do without any sermons for a while. I do not expect to find so kind a pastor very soon.

"From your first text, 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me. Take heed, therefore, how ye hear,' I accepted you as a teacher learning more from God than from man. I have followed you from beginning to the end, and I have worked *with* you and *for* you to the best of my ability, my strength, and my means. Would I had been a more efficient worker! I have

taken heed as to how I have heard. You have not changed my views so much as brought out more clearly what was already in my own mind. The best lesson I have learned from you is a firmer trust in God. You have brought me to the 'Source of all Truth, whence Jesus drew his life.' Here you leave me. An essential point to have reached, in my view; a firm rock on which to rest, and one that can never be taken from me. Some people are not satisfied with a faith so simple. They need more to rest on; as if there could be a stronger, better support than the 'voice in the soul.' From loss of hearing, the 'voice within' has spoken more clearly to me perhaps. . . . It is a very great disappointment to me to part with you and your family, for I have become very much attached to you all; for even little G—— has learned to look upon me as a friend. It is not every one who wins me; and when one does, it is all the harder to separate from him. Still, we are often compelled to give up our preferences, as I have learned before now. . . . The benediction I ask is the one you have so often asked for us (Mary —— ears to me, and a reliable authority): 'May the Heavenly Father bless, preserve, and guide you all. May he give you wisdom to know and strength to do his holy will forevermore.'"

Mr. Noyes, being asked for his recollections of Miss Ellis, writes: —

"Sallie had a very true, deep, strong religious nature, and a leaning to religious, not to say theological,

studies. Alone in Cincinnati when I first went there, I was often a guest at Mr. Ellis's Sunday table. Sallie borrowed my sermons. She liked to talk over the subject of the sermon, and this led to my recommending to her many books for her reading, and loaning to her what I had in my library. She became familiar with the writings of most of our Unitarian writers, — with Channing, Clarke, Hedge, Dewey, Norton, Furness, and many others. She was no careless reader, but a student of the writer's thought. . . . She had great breadth of mental outlook, and a great heart of charity and love for all. She admired the diversity of opinion in our body, and had faith in the unity of the Spirit that would fuse us into one. . . . If Sallie ever expressed wonder and surprise, it was that Unitarianism did not grow as fast as it ought, and that those who accepted its teachings did not identify themselves with it. We had our Mission School of about three hundred pupils, and our Sewing School. . . . The time had not come for the Pamphlet Mission or the Post Office; yet Miss Ellis was making the best preparation possible for her after-work, and in due time the door of best usefulness stood wide open. You know, as we all know, how well she filled her office. . . . Her letters were sermons, — tracts in themselves, best adapted to her correspondents, and, I am persuaded, did a grand work of their own. She heard with difficulty, she was not an easy talker, but she wrote with great clearness. . . . More than the books she sent out, she was to many a one the blessed missionary of our faith. . . . In her early studies the miracle question was a stumbling-block to

Sallie. The old-time interpretation of miracle she could not accept; neither could she take up with the mythical theory of Strauss. Miracle must be in harmony with law. Jesus must be to her the natural flower of *human* nature, the perfect blossom of *human* development. Nature and the supernatural must be in harmony. Hence the delight she took in Dr. Furness's works. His works helped her, as they have so many others, out of her difficulties about the supernatural. And more than that, they fed her religious life, pure and simple, and let her into the heart of Christ. She often alluded to her debt to Dr. Furness, whom she admired and loved."

Miss Ellis little expected or would have desired to figure as a Unitarian saint. Her estimate of herself was lowly. Whatever her faults and limitations, however, they were only those natural to a strong nature driven in upon itself, beating in vain against the stern walls that everywhere surrounded it. Bravely did she strive to resist what she clearly perceived to be the natural tendencies of her peculiar troubles, and bravely did she succeed. The prayers, the tears, the struggles of those lonely, baffled years are known only to God, and are only hinted at here and there in the diary kept during a large part of her life. An unique diary it is, showing, as nothing else could, the passion of religious devotion which burned in

her soul. Each day's record, no matter how brief, ends with passages of Scripture, or sometimes a hymn, appropriate to the day's mood or experience. In reading it, one realizes afresh the richness of the Bible in comfort and strength. The diary furnishes a complete history of the Unitarian Church of Cincinnati for many years. All the individual joys and sorrows of its members, their birthdays and their death-days, are here recorded with loving sympathy. Also, a complete record of every Sunday's service for many years is given, with always a full abstract of the sermon, sometimes filling several pages of fine, close writing. Occasionally it happened that the minister failed to hand Miss Sallie his sermon after delivery, — a grievous disappointment, almost too great to bear, as the diary testifies. Each year the personal matter grows less, the religious meditations and quotations consume more and more space, until of the journal in the last years her sister writes: "It seems to have been kept mainly to give vent to her pure, spiritual nature, which was ever longing for some expression of itself." A very few extracts are here given from the diary, — a glimpse only of the struggles and longings that unconsciously to herself were all fitting her for her work.

DIARY.

1873. I have been too indolent for a few years. Now I must be up and doing, with a heart for anything, and remember that these clouds that overshadow us all are meant to make us look beyond for the sunshine. "No cross, no crown." I have a project in my head that I wish very much to carry out. I am tired of my selfish life; and all that reconciles me to it is, that I accept it as a necessary discipline for my restless spirit, to teach me submission, and help me to say, "Thy will, not mine, be done." My idea of a *true* Christian is to be working for others always, and not thinking of self. My desire is, to start a sewing-class from the Mission School, to be kept up during the summer, if I can only get the means of carrying out my plan, and find some one who is willing to take charge of it in case I am not able to be there. I would *gladly* make the sacrifice of personal comfort.

The sewing-class was started, and Miss Ellis became one of its most devoted teachers, though working often in great feebleness and pain.

Feel bluer, but I believe my deafness is bringing me truer faith, and resignation. . . . Another very warm day, but I have managed to get through the day cheerfully, thinking of heavenly things. . . . I cannot understand what makes me so ugly sometimes. I pray that my evil spirit may be subdued some day. . . . Do not

know of anything I have done to benefit others to-day, only I have been cheerful. . . . I have felt pretty well, and this day went rightly with me, though I do not know as I have advanced the cause of life very much. . . . How I do long to live a perfectly unselfish life, and to be a blessing to those around me, as my life was intended for! . . . Am reading "Old Kensington," by Miss Thackeray, — a real love-story; and it makes me sad, as usual. . . . Still in the house, and feel poorly. Feel a little dull this evening, and on thinking over my life, think that I have had more than most people of my age to endure, and wonder that I keep up my spirits as well as I have; and it is only that I feel that all is the necessary discipline for me. "Let us but be genuine, honest, and true in everything, even in the smallest thing, and we have in that the sign and the pledge of entire consecration of heart and life to God" (J. F. Clarke). "Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life" (Rev. ii. 10). . . . Gave up to a *terrible* fit of the "blues" this afternoon and evening. Am *so* tired of suffering all the time, that I gave way under my cross to-day. It seems as if I can't struggle to live longer.

Sunday. A bright day; I was not able to go out, but felt that it was good to remain at home to think over my blessings. . . . Attended Bible-class this evening. I came home in rather a despondent mood. I find my cross hard to bear, but must pray for more strength."

1874. Sent my old Bible to be bound to-day, which I have used twenty-three years. . . . I have felt

extremely favored to-day, in that I was able to attend the Sewing School, which I feared all the week I might be disappointed in. We closed the school to-day, after twenty-four weeks' work. It has been time well spent, and I feel particularly thankful to my heavenly Father in having heard my prayer for health, strength, and good weather. One strong desire of my life has been vouchsafed me, and I feel overpowered with joy to-night. . . . I have felt to-day how much I need the assistance of Christ, and may his religion help me to be victorious in the end.

Quoting an extract from Miss Sedgwick's diary on the unmarried life, which ends, "Though not *first* to any, I am, like Themistocles, *second* to a great many: my sisters are all kind and affectionate to me, my brothers generous and invariably kind; their children all love me," Miss Ellis adds: "These *very words* I can repeat as my experience. . . . If I can only add a few *drops* of happiness to his life [a brother's], I shall be too happy."

1875. Mr. Noyes called Monday to bring me his sermon, and it made me very resigned. The text was from 2 Cor. xii. 10, —"When I am weak, then am I strong."

Paul's "thorn in the flesh" was the topic of the discourse, and several pages of extracts are copied in the journal.

It is one of the trials of my life not to assist in the church as I desire to. I presume it must be because I neglect other duties, and see but one thing before me, and that is, to give up the *idol* of my life, and do the duty that is nearest to me; but it is a sore trial to me. . . . . This has been an eventful week to me, for last Sunday Mr. Noyes closed his ministry with us. . . . Now they have really gone, it makes me feel rather despondent, though I know they have left many blessings to me behind them.

I am beginning some fancy work, in hopes of brightening my life somewhat. I am not reconciled to the hardships of life. . . . Am anxious to learn wood-carving. . . . I try to have the faith *of* Jesus more than that about him.

. . . Went to see about trumpets yesterday, and came home greatly disheartened, and shall have to submit with a good grace to the cross. . . . Mr. Wendte lectures on the New Testament this evening. I should be glad to hear him, but believe all is best as it is.

1877. We had a beautiful sermon to-day, which I took especially to myself, on "The Lonely Hours of Life." . . . Am feeling better to-day, and the sermon (on "Be Strong, and of a Good Courage") roused my better nature, ready to go on courageously. . . . Lecture this evening on "Funeral Customs." I did not attend, for the sermon to-day (on "Prayer") so exalted me that I did n't feel like listening to things of the world. . . . Wakened feeling disconsolate this morning, but resolved to bear the cross of life as trustfully and cheer-

fully as possible, and lay up treasures during the summer ready to "give out" when all return in the winter. Impressed two little pieces on my mind, — one by Spitta, in "Day unto Day," —

> "Glad with thy light and glowing with thy love,
> So let me ever think and speak and move."

The other by Whittier, —

> "Lord, help me strive 'gainst each besetting sin."

Went to Madame Wendte's. Brought home, "Ten Great Religions," "Reason in Religion," and "Evolution in Religion."

Thus did Miss Ellis fortify herself for the summer vacation of the church. Emerson's "Society and Solitude" was another book read this vacation.

Have not lived up to my ideal the past week, and particularly to-day. However, may the good Father pardon my shortcomings and aid me to do better. . . . I feel that I have added something to my life for the benefit of others by the rest and reading of this summer. I hope to study up German a little, among my busy hours this winter. I can retain so little in my head, it is discouraging to read. I must work the harder, and believe "all is for the best," and pray, in faith, for patience. . . . Mr. Wendte's first sermon — subject, "After Vacation" — made me feel somewhat depressed, for I feel so anxious to do for *every one*, and have not the means or strength. [She resolves to]

do my little part and not discourage [the minister], — do my part more by showing an interest than by the amount of work I do. . . . I am miserable, dyspeptic, and disappointed. . . . I have felt heartily discouraged this week in every way, but the church did me good this morning.

Mr. Noyes was succeeded as pastor at Cincinnati by Rev. Charles W. Wendte in the fall of 1875. The idea of preaching, of carrying to others the blessed Unitarian faith which had been her joy and strength, now filled Miss Ellis's soul. She discussed various schemes to this end with friends who respected her and her earnestness too much to laugh at the (in worldly eyes) utter absurdity of her hopes, as futile as Miss Toosey's desire to go as a missionary to Nawaub. Could she not go out into Ohio villages and hold lay services, reading the printed prayers and sermons of our Unitarian ministers? Great must have been the yearning for the ministry consuming her soul, to tempt the reserved, feeble little woman, with her deafness and dyspepsia, her incessant cough, her love of her own room and things, her exactness and exquisite nicety of habit, seriously to contemplate such a career. Yet, but for absolute physical incapacity, and the dissuasions (on that account) of her family, she would certainly

have made the experiment. Or might she not open a reading-room in the church, to be kept open all the week, where the treasures of Unitarian literature could be dispensed? Even in her last years she seriously meditated going to the church every Sunday morning during the vacation to open her library and meet those who might want books, papers, or advice. The summer vacation was always a grief to her. She wished the church might be open every day.

Nov. 9, 1876, a rough draft of the following letter to Mr. Wendte appears in her diary: —

"I cannot resist returning special thanks for your sermon of last Sunday, 'To what end is your life?' I do not know when a sermon has so fully aroused the will of my youth. . . . At twenty years of age, 'the object of my toil' was to live for the earthly comfort of the family, for the good of society in general, so far as in my power, at the same time keeping an eye to the higher interests of life by working in and for the church. . . . 'The goal of my ambition' in middle life is to labor for the spiritual welfare of those about me; but I find myself without means to assist others. . . . My preference is decidedly to labor for the higher natures of others as well as for myself; therefore, remembering your kind offer in your letter to me during the summer, I ask, can you suggest anything for me to engage in, in the spreading of Christianity? [She wishes] to devote the remainder of my

life to the highest and best I know. If you can put me in the way of assisting others as well as myself in the highest and holiest way, I shall be ever indebted to you. I shall be glad to so live that when I lay down my life I shall in some measure have returned the many kindnesses of parents, sisters, brothers, and friends, repaid the efforts of teachers and pastors in my behalf, and proved myself a worthy child to Him who gave me being."

At the end, however, she writes: "Did n't send it. Concluded it was better to talk with him."

The same ideas in another form appear again in the diary as a letter to Mr. Wendte. One of the burdens on Mr. Wendte's heart in those days was "to find something for Miss Ellis to do." Partly to this end he devised Sunday-school lessons in manuscript, which Miss Ellis copied each week for all the teachers. In 1877 he appointed a Missionary Society with a formidable list of names, the significant one among whom events proved to be Miss Sallie Ellis, Treasurer, — she being, indeed, the "society." The little programme says: —

"The object of the Missionary Society is to spread the knowledge and increase the influence of Liberal religious ideas throughout the city and State by publications, correspondence, and such other means as may seem to it suitable and best."

During the winter of 1877–78 Miss Ellis, aided by Mr. Wendte, distributed 1,846 tracts and 211 "Pamphlet Missions" (as baby "Unity" was called) in twenty-six States. Miss Ellis was always scrupulously systematic, methodical, and exact in all she did, and a huge pile of closely written blank books gives every minutia connected with the business details of her work. In her diary was a copy of this letter to Mr. Wendte, dated Feb. 21, 1878: —

"Why not have a 'Mission Sunday' sometime soon? Do not announce it previously, however; for some might feel inclined to remain at home; but catch as many together as possible, and make them listen to a rousing address from you, — a report of what you have done and the letters you have received. It might not be as social or interesting as a concert or something else; but it would not hurt the people to listen to it, and would make the missionary work more a reality to them, and I believe in the end an appeal from you would bring in more money than anything else.

"I have one request to make of you, however; and that is, that you do not bring my name out in the pulpit, unless you have occasion to mention the names of the Missionary Society. It is merely necessary to mention you have been assisted by one of the 'Missionary Committee,' not saying 'Treasurer,'

man or woman. I have no objection if any one asks you privately who has done the work, to have you tell them. I love to do good work, but wish no other praise than to know that the recipient of the act has been benefited thereby. I act from the mere pleasure of doing good to others and believing it to be right, therefore deserve no credit. . . . The winter's work has brought out the desire of younger days, when a Presbyterian friend used to tell me, 'You ought to go as a missionary to China.' I then had five little brothers and sisters to help care for, and considered that 'mission' enough. Since they are grown my health has been too poor to undertake anything, but now I should like a work in life. If I have a 'taste' or 'talent' for anything, it is for the study and the spread of religion. . . . All the family are only too kind to me, which only makes me the more anxious to use my one talent to the utmost extent. If you know of any work I could assist in, in our denomination, East or West, I would be much obliged to you if you would let me know."

The first mentions in the journal of missionary work are Nov. 25, 1877, "Mr. Wendte came to me with missionary work to do, — five hundred tracts to distribute;" and Dec. 9, 1877, "Feel that I am doing good in lending books and papers and distributing tracts."

Sept. 5, 1880, while visiting her sister in Phila-

delphia she opens a new volume of the journal as follows: —

Too warm to venture to church. The church in Cincinnati opens to-day. Would I might be one of the congregation! I *am*, in spirit! In opening this book on Sunday I would dedicate it to a high use, and open it with ascription of praise to the Giver of all good. "Pray for us unto the Lord thy God, . . . that the Lord thy God may show us the way wherein we may walk" (Jer. xlii. 2, 3). "Quicken thou me in thy way" (Psalms cxix. 37).

The following prayers are then copied: —

"My Father, may I ever humbly follow in thy way; may I ever trust, with the full assurance of faith, that it does lead to thy heavenly kingdom. It is often narrow and perplexed, and I cannot see where it is leading me; yet, though the guiding light of thy holy word may be half obscured by the mists of the valley, if I fix my eyes steadily upon it, it will become brighter and brighter; I shall see my way clearly in this seemingly intricate road, and discern, even at the end of it, the entrance to thy heavenly mansion."

"O God, may our souls be full of life. Save us from an inanimate and sluggish life. . . . Inspire our sensibility to good; may we see more and more its loveliness and beauty. And may all the varied experience of life draw us nearer to thee" (Channing).

Then follows "an abstract from Channing's Memoirs, showing how, by self-scrutiny, his

character was formed, by many trials and denials." She then copies eighteen pages from Channing's "Rules for Self-Discipline," at the end writing, "All these pages from Channing are written from memory, not copied."

The second rule copied is, "Let me not *talk* of pains, sicknesses, complaints," etc.

Following the rules is a poem copied from the "Christian Register" of Sept. 4, 1880.

WHAT OF THAT?

"Tired?" Well, what of that?
Didst fancy life was spent on beds of ease,
Fluttering the rose-leaves scattered by the breeze?
Come, rouse thee! work while it is called day!
Coward, arise! Go forth upon thy way.

"Lonely?" And what of that?
Some must be lonely; 't is not given to all
To feel a heart responsive rise and fall,
To blend another life into its own.
Work may be done in loneliness. Work on!

"Dark?" Well, what of that?
Didst fondly dream the sun would never set?
Dost fear to lose thy way? Take courage yet!
Learn thou to walk by faith, and not by sight;
Thy steps will guided be, and guided right.

"Hard?" Well, what of that?
Didst fancy life one summer holiday,
With lessons none to learn, and nought but play?
Go, get thee to thy task! Conquer or die!
It must be learned! Learn it, then, patiently.

"No help?" Nay, 't is not so!
Though human help is far, thy God is nigh;
Who feeds the ravens, hears his children's cry.
He 's near thee wheresoe'er thy footsteps roam,
And he will guide thee, light thee, help thee home.

Then follows a selection from Emerson: —

"The scholar must be a solitary, laborious, modest, and charitable soul. He must embrace solitude as a bride. He must have his glees and his glooms alone. Go, scholar, cherish your soul; expel companions; set your habits to a life of solitude; then will the faculties rise fair and full within, like forest trees, field flowers; you will have results, which, when you meet your fellow men, you can communicate and they will gladly receive. It is the noble, manly, just thought which is the superiority demanded of you; and not crowds. but solitude, confers this elevation."

Next follows a page of "Paragraphs for Preachers." Evidently this year sees the dying of the first hope to be a preacher, and the gradual dawn of her life's real mission. Seven pages follow of "Prayers altered and rearranged for my own use, from 'Daily Praise and Prayer.'"

Three or four appropriate prayers are united in one, headed, "First evening," "First Morning," "Second Evening," etc. These were apparently prepared for the lay services she had dreamed of holding. A page or two more, and this entry, October 17, marks the dawning of the new hope: "Last week received a very kind letter from Mr. Wendte, in which he stated, 'We have made you chairman of a Book and Tract Table in the church;' therefore I feel bound to return to attend to it." Further extracts from the diary are: —

Saturday evening, J—— accidentally broke my audiphone. I felt *lost* then, but wouldn't let them know how badly I felt about it, and even went to church without it, for fear they would feel hurt about it. It came home mended, this evening.

October 31. Finished G——'s afghan, also completed the embroidery of fourth skirt for Mrs. ——, and first of baby C——'s mittens. Was quite interested in a letter of Mrs. —— in "Register" of last week on "The Woman's Auxiliary Conference." Hope she *will* succeed in establishing a Woman's Club for discussion and debate in Cincinnati.

Miss F. Le Baron, whose friendship with Miss Ellis dates back to the latter's residence in Chicago, writes that she has several letters from Miss Ellis setting forth her desire to preach, but unfortunately they are in a totally inaccessible

place. This allusion, in the diary, evidently points to the final renunciation of Miss Ellis's first missionary impulse: —

November 7. A letter from Miss Le Baron, of Chicago, in regard to my engaging in missionary work in the West. She finally closed with the idea that I had come to myself. In a letter from A—— this week she says to me, "*Our* lot in life appears to be that of patience and submission," which brings to my mind quite a sermon, in other's words, which I hope to write out to-day. It is time to prepare for church. . . . The thought suggested by A——'s letter with regard to submission to our lot called to mind the passage William Ellery Channing wrote to his friend Francis. "You seem to go upon the supposition that our circumstances are determined by Providence. I believe they are determined by ourselves. Man is the artificer of his own fortunes. By exertion he can enlarge his sphere of usefulness. By activity he can 'multiply himself.' It is mind that gives him the ascendency in society; it is mind that gives him power and ability. It depends upon himself to call forth the energies of mind, to strengthen the intellect, to form benevolence into a habit of the soul. The consequence I draw from these principles is that Heaven, by placing me in particular circumstances, has not assigned me a determinate sphere of usefulness (as you seem to think), but that it is in my power, and of course my duty, to spread the 'beams of my light' wider into the 'night of adversity.'

Miss Ellis continues, apparently partly in her own words: —

With this idea, then, that we largely fashion our own lives, that, "working with God, and for him, our lives can know no true failure, but all things shall contribute to our soul's true success," let us take up our cross, and then we shall find

"The burden light,
The path made straight, the way all bright,
Our warfare cease;
So shall we win the crown,
At last our life lay down
In perfect peace."

Two pages more on the same topic, of original and selected matter skilfully blended (perhaps the whole a bit of one of the sermons never to be preached), end with the hymn, copied in full, —

"I ask not wealth, but power to take
And use the things I have aright;"

and Miss Ellis finally sums all up, "True submission, then, consists in *working* out our own salvation, looking to God for strength wherewith to work." The only entry for the next day is part of the hymn, —

"But God, through ways they have not known,
Will lead his own."

November 11 she returned home.

November 14. Attended fair, and met many friends. Mr. Wendte kindly set me to work at a Book and

Tract Table, and I sold two books and distributed a quantity of free matter.

December 5. Am thoroughly on the road to the Book and Tract Table in the church. Hope it may prove a good thing, and that I shall do it *faithfully*.

December 12. Have been miserable all the week, and quite sick two and a half hours Thursday. Could n't raise my head, and had to pretty much give up all day. Had sociable this week, and I was on hand to urge the book trade, and hoped to have a supply to-day, but was disappointed in it. It was one of the unsatisfactory days to me, for I have had such a tremendous noise in my head that I could n't hear at all.

December 19. Held a meeting at Mrs. ——'s on Friday, with regard to the Woman's Auxiliary Missionary work. It has been decided that I am to take charge of distribution of Liberal publications, also to canvass for the "Register." Had Mr. Mayo to preach for us to-day. I was astonished to hear how well I heard him, and how *natural* it seemed. It made my cross all the heavier in contrast. [The sonnet, "Strength for the Day," by Rachel G. Alsop, is copied to close this day's record.]

Feb. 10, 1881. Began committing "A Statement of Unitarian Belief in Bible Language."

February 13. I have felt rather depressed this week, and *needed* the church to-day, which did do me good, as I heard more of the sermon than I have heard for thirteen years.

February 20. Sermon to-day on "Are ye good Hearers?" I think my remark to Mr. Wendte last Sunday must have called it forth. . . . Mr. Wendte made the following beautiful tribute to the deaf. . . . I heard just enough to overcome me, and thought two or three times that I should break down. Have cried and laughed over the sermon.

A long extract is copied into the journal, of which this is a portion: —

"Blindness only separates a man from Nature, but the loss of hearing also isolates him, more or less, from human companionship. As a natural consequence, the deaf are apt to lose interest in the social life around them, and to grow discontented, suspicious, and morose. You and I know beautiful examples to the contrary, — persons so patient, brave, and uncomplaining amidst their heavy tribulation, so sunny of temper and full of human kindness, that they are a constant inspiration and joy to us. Yet theirs is a hard struggle, to remain true and sweet and Christian with such fearful odds against them in the journey of life."

February 27. Am becoming quite interested in missionary work in Ravenna, Ohio.

> "We scatter seeds with careless hand,
> And dream we ne'er shall see them more;
> But for a thousand years
> Their fruit appears,
> In weeds that mar the land,
> Or healthful store."

March 13. To-day is my forty-sixth birthday, and I am about ready, or rather have resolved, to open a Circulating Library in the church, as quite a number are in favor of it. We organized our Women's Auxiliary Conference last Tuesday, of a rainy day: Mrs. Fayette Smith, President; Mrs. Alice Williams Brotherton, Vice-president; Fannie Field, Treasurer and Recording Secretary; Miss Ellis, Corresponding Secretary; Executive Committee (with the above), Mrs. Davies Wilson, Miss Elizabeth D. Allen.

The foundation of the Circulating Library was Miss Ellis's own collection of religious books. Book lovers know what this sacrifice would have been to a less generous nature, one less intent on helping others. Additions were made by gifts from individuals and authors, and by Miss Ellis's occasional purchase of some book whose need she felt, until the library now numbers over one hundred and thirty volumes. These books were loaned at church, and by mail all over the country.

A letter to Rev. A. A. Livermore reveals the brisk, happy, and business-like Miss Ellis of the later years, with her hands at last full of work for her denomination. It also records the advent of her first correspondent, Mr. Julius Woodruff.

March 10, 1881.

I have been better in health this winter than for many years, — for a severe winter is all the better for me, — and have been able to keep *very* busy. Mr. Wendte has made me chairman of a Book and Tract Table in the church, which has kept me very busy; and in addition, the Unity Club made me Corresponding Secretary of their Sunday Afternoon Lecture Committee, which involved distributing the tickets (one thousand) and then collecting the money on them. . . . In the mean time, too, I was agent here for the "Register," had that to attend to, besides attending to sale of books, paying for them, and sending new orders, also "Unity" subscribers coming in, and hunting up members for the Women's Auxiliary Conference, and receiving their money. Now, do you not think for one who has always been more spiritually inclined, that I have taken quite *too* much to money matters?

Well, in distributing "Registers" through the State I have come across a very interesting, appreciative young man of twenty-one, in Ravenna, Ohio, and I have reason to think we have created quite a stir in the little town. Mr. Woodruff, my correspondent, writes a very good letter, and is quite enthusiastic on the subject of Unitarianism, and is willing to do missionary work, distributing widely the documents I send him, and has recommended a young man, formerly a student of theology, an intelligent, thinking man, who is much interested in our views. He now works on a farm and teaches school, in order to gain an education.

On Wednesday last we organized our Women's Auxiliary Conference, at which I read Mr. Woodruff's letters, and the ladies at once moved that we should propose Meadville to our young friend, whose name is ——. I am to write and ask whether he would like to go to the college at Meadville, and in the mean time am to find out through you the conditions on which he could be admitted. I should be only too happy if I prove the means of assisting one young man to the ministry, and shall feel that all these many years of interest in the church have not been lost, if we only succeed in doing this much good. Besides all this other work, I find the ladies are much in favor of a Circulating Library in the church, so I am going to found my library soon.

The journal, March 20, shows the indomitable will that ruled the feeble body : —

Yesterday [Saturday] I was at the church all day to get the library in order. Was taken with vertigo, and for over an hour and a half could n't walk straight. J—— S—— happened to be at the church at choir-meeting, and brought me home. By bedtime could walk alone, and to-day have been attending to duties at church. Succeeded in getting the Library settled to my satisfaction, and was glad there was no one there. Opened my library March 19. Mr. W—— announced me " Miss Sarah Ellis " in the papers.

March 28. Have felt quite encouraged this week by applications for documents. Have just mailed to

Rev.——, "Statement of Unitarian Belief in Bible Language." [This applicant is now in a Unitarian pulpit.]

April 3. A beautiful sermon in "Register" to-day —"Life's Shadows" — by Rev. J. Ll. Jones. [She copies two pages.]

May 1. Feel deeply interested in a correspondent we have in Springfield, . . . who confesses himself something of an atheist, and I am hunting up all the convincing articles upon the subject of God and Immortality that I can find, and came across a "Unitarian Review," of June, 1876, which seems to have been written for his very case. . . . Hope these will be convincing to the Springfield Club, which was formed last Sunday, with ten members to begin with.

June 2. Am now quite interested in trying to manage it so as to keep the church open two hours Sundays during the vacation, for persons to come and read and take home books. Hope I may succeed.

June 12. Have felt tired to-day, but enjoyed the day, for Mr. Wendte and mother dined here. He tells me I may "run the church" during the vacation, which will make me *very* happy.

June 29. The hottest day of the month for ten years, and the hottest of the season so far. Intense. One hundred in the shade at noon. Have been reading W. R. Alger's "School of Life," from which the following abstract. . . .

Then follow three pages of the "abstract," in a close, minute handwriting, ending this volume of the journal, — the last submitted to the writer's

inspection, because, as has been previously said, there was almost no personal matter in the diaries of the remaining years.

Miss Ellis's ardent desire to keep the church open during the summer vacation had to be abandoned, owing to the reluctance of her family to have one so feeble at the church alone; and she went Saturday afternoons instead, when the sexton was there.

The Cincinnati branch of the Women's Auxiliary Conference, on its organization in March, 1881, looking about for work to do, remembered occasional letters received by Mr. Wendte in response to the documents sent out by him and Miss Ellis. These letters seemed to hint at a possible opportunity awaiting this Unitarian church, standing so isolated in the heart of the great rich West, where the multitude of Ingersoll and Liberal clubs, and of intelligent people outside all churches, seemed to indicate a want that the evangelical denominations did not meet. It was therefore resolved to attempt extending the work begun by Mr. Wendte, by advertising in the daily papers Unitarian literature for free distribution, — an experiment never before tried. Miss Ellis entered upon her duties as Corresponding Secretary "without money and without price" (though

later a small annual salary of one hundred dollars was raised for her), but with an immense zeal. The advertisement's line or two of fine print, almost lost, apparently, on the broad side of the daily paper, inserted only once a week, nevertheless soon began to bring Miss Ellis letters that equally surprised and delighted us, showing that we had not over-estimated the demand for Unitarian literature in the West.

Rev. J. Ll. Jones being in Cincinnati, the first bundle of letters was read to him, and his opinion, as an experienced Western missionary, anxiously awaited. It was given in these words: —

"I think you Cincinnati women have got hold of the *little end* of *a big thing*, and if Miss Ellis's health and your enthusiasm hold out, something is bound to come of it. Go on, by all means." He added, "I wish I knew that Miss Ellis had ten years more to live."

Four years and a half, however, was the short term of service allowed her in her mission, found at last after years of longing and groping towards it vainly. But now it was seen that all these years of suffering had not been in vain. She who had endured so much was quick to sympathize with others. The religious studies undertaken for her own consolation enabled her wisely to direct the reading of her correspondents.

Even her deafness seemed specially to fit her for her work. Shut apart from the din and bustle of modern life in a quiet world of her own, from its peaceful communings she sent out light and strength to others. The poor, denied life, like a plant severely pruned by the careful gardener to insure a late, full bloom, now reached out and touched many lives with a wonderful uplifting power.

Her records of this four and a half years' work show that she received 1,672 letters and postals, wrote 2,541, distributed at church and by mail 22,042 tracts, papers, etc.; sold 286 books, loaned 258 books, and obtained about sixty subscribers to religious papers.[1] Mere figures, however, but poorly tell the story. Several young men have entered or will enter the ministry, as one result of her efforts. Many souls wrestling in utter loneliness with doubts they dared not confide to their nearest friends, received, from her wise sympathy and counsel, restoration to religious faith, and strength to bear heavy burdens with renewed courage, animated by trust in a loving Father hitherto concealed from them behind the out-

[1] Besides this, much reading matter was sent to the City Workhouse, to the Old Men and Women's Home, and other institutions.

grown phraseology of antiquated creeds, — creeds which their reason rejected. Many, indeed most of these correspondents, overjoyed with their new faith, hastened to share it with friends, and many a little missionary centre began to grow in localities far from any Unitarian church, fostered by people who had never heard a Unitarian sermon. So the ground was being prepared for the State missionary. Her work, too, opened the eyes of her denomination to its opportunities, and did much to promote that missionary activity in which lies our brightest hope for the future. She is the acknowledged pioneer of the Post Office Mission.

As her work began to attract attention, many letters came from those desiring to undertake like work, both East and West, asking advice, full and explicit accounts of her methods, etc.; and many long letters were written in reply. A Unitarian Club formed among the soldiers in the Columbus barracks was one of her interests, until its dissolution by the ordering of its members to other posts. She supplied much reading matter to, and corresponded occasionally with, soldiers at the Dayton Soldiers' Home. A soldier in Wyoming Territory was for a long time a most grateful recipient of reading from her, which he shared with his company. Small clubs in several

localities were supplied by her with matter for discussion and study during their existence. Wherever she had two or three correspondents, she always urged the formation of reading or Unity clubs. For some months she had an interesting correspondence with a young man of more than usual intelligence in our City Workhouse, loaning him such books as Channing's "Life and Works," Dewey's "Human Nature," and Merriam's "Way of Life." She never heard from him after he left the workhouse, but always had faith that he was somewhere living up to, or towards, the good resolves so often expressed to her. Through him, and Mr. Beach, of Joliet, Ill., our attention was called to the need of supplying prisoners with good reading matter, both religious and secular. Correspondence was opened with the warden and chaplain at the State Penitentiary, Frankfort, Ky., which led to the sending of their "Registers" there regularly by two Boston ladies, and eventually to the sending of many barrels of reading matter both to Joliet and Kentucky by the Women's Auxiliary Conference of Boston.

A great pleasure of her last years was attending the Western Conference at Chicago in May, 1883. Published accounts of her work had made

her well known in the denomination; so that, as the Cincinnati party reported on their return home, "Miss Ellis was decidedly the belle of the Conference." Every one wanted to see and talk with her, ask her advice, etc. It was an immense satisfaction to her to meet personally, to see and hear (for she almost seemed to hear through the eager eyes), men and women whose fame and writings were so familiar to her. Every session of the Conference saw Miss Ellis seated in the front pew, audiphone in hand, eagerly intent on the exercises. Social beguilements might make other people late at the morning devotions, but never Miss Ellis, who took her conferences, like all else, conscientiously.

In May, 1885, she again attended the Western Conference at St. Louis, though in great feebleness of body. Rev. W. C. Gannett, in "Unity," thus speaks of her: —

"A last summer's letter from the little mother of the Post Office Mission, who has just died in Cincinnati, will be of interest now. Some who were present at the last May Conference in St. Louis may remember the pathos of the quiet figure sitting in the front pews and trying on her echo-fan to catch the patter of the words said round her. The wee, sick, deafened body in which she did her work so strong-

heartedly makes that work all the more an example and an inspiration. Strange enough should it prove that this bit of a lady, almost caged from the world by cripplings, had opened the most effective channel yet made for carrying our liberal faith to the world. Perhaps it *takes* a thorn in the flesh to make a missionary. She certainly has done more than many a stout *son* of the Gospel to keep her name remembered in our Western churches. This letter hints her pluck and her joy in the work, and the struggle of it. She had been urged to go into the country for a short rest, but replied : —

The country is not the place for me to stay in any time. The morning and evening air keep my head roaring so, and increase catarrh. I have learned that to stay home during the summer, make no special effort, and work on slowly, is the better plan. If I go away, there is constantly an effort over something. I return tired, work has accumulated. I have to work doubly hard, and soon use up the little gained. I am too weak in summer to wish to come in contact with people to whom I have to be agreeable. Another difficulty, — the country is too *quiet* for me. I am inclined to be a "hermit," and when I do go out, which I do daily, even now I am so sick, I need the stir, bustle, commotion, and the stores to change the thoughts. I loved the country before I was so deaf, — now city life is better for me; but I love to refresh myself by a ride into the country in the street cars, where I can study *human* nature on the way. . . . I work on principle, and for the real love of working. I am not happy unless at work, and can't bear to tear myself away from my little congregation, my

papers, books, etc. *They* suffer for it. The family do not wish me to keep so busy, but I am better for it, and my physician is on my side. "Keep up!" [The next few sentences have already been given, in reference to Mr. Noyes.] Don't give me undue credit for my appearance at the St. Louis Conference. I tried to kill three birds with one stone (I don't wear bird's wings in my hat, however), — to attend the Conference, visit a brother, and gain strength. The last I failed in. . . . I have written this long letter in two sittings. I have improved decidedly within the past few days, and with pleasant rides and good food and care shall soon be better. Most sincerely and cordially your friend, SALLIE ELLIS.

CINCINNATI, July 28, 1885."

Strangely enough, one's first thought of Miss Ellis was never as an invalid. She so ignored the poor, weak body that she made you forget it too. She was always so *alive*, so full of interest and joy in her work. With what delight would she say, "This new tract is exactly the thing to send ——," or announce, "such a good letter from ——." Even during the last months, when the ravages of disease could no longer be concealed, she *would* not be sick. She set aside your sympathy. She was always "better," "only my limbs are so weak to-day," or "my breath is so short," or "it always makes me cough to walk," as if these were mere casual incidents quite unworthy of notice.

The last of her life, it was pitiful to see her still clinging to her work, still persisting in caring for her own room, declining all offers of help. She often rose at five o'clock Sundays, because obliged by weakness to work slowly, that she might reach church early, to prepare her Tract Table before the congregation arrived. When no longer able to remain to the services, she still came and ministered to her own special congregation at the Tract Table, though obliged by weakness to sit. When she no longer had strength to arrange her hair, she quietly cut it off. But she went on with her work. To one offering help she said, "When I cannot do my work, I don't want to live." Again, she said, "There are many who need me, and they keep me alive." To the last she declined being considered an invalid, — did not wish any one to walk out with her, although the family were very uneasy to have one so weak and so deaf on the street alone. She walked out every day, until the last time she was forced to lean against the door-post and gain breath and strength to take the final step up into the house.

All this time she was writing letters of cheer and strength, seldom intimating that all was not well with her. When finally obliged to keep her

bed, she faded away rapidly, only living about two weeks. The last postal card to a correspondent was begun in bed, in a trembling hand, ending abruptly, "Too sick to write," and it was finished for her. Although at times she had a little of the consumptive's feeling that she might possibly rally, and even recover strength to work again, yet she perceived, as she said to her mother, that "the sands are running out fast," and made all her preparations for death in the quiet spirit of one merely going on a journey into a familiar country. One who watched with her one of the last nights spoke of a beautiful prayer she offered in the middle of the night. She was unable to turn herself in bed, and said to this friend with a smile, "This body wants turning so." Poor body! not much longer had she to endure its weaknesses. Her religion was too habitual, too much a part of her very soul, for many outward words or professions. It was her life, her self. Why should she talk about it?

Mr. Thayer had always given her a list of the hymns and the full order of service, and the sermon to read. The Sunday before her death the sermon was returned, with the message that Miss Ellis was unable to read it, but had asked her mother to copy the text for her. A week before

her death a friend, finding that in her excessive conscientiousness she was letting business details of the Women's Auxiliary Conference trouble her lest she should forget some item, went over all the books, wrote business letters, and settled accounts, at her dictation. Speaking of her work, she expressed faith that "God will raise up some one to do it." She said earnestly, "I have always wanted to do something for my denomination." It had evidently been a little of a struggle for her to leave the work she loved, just as it began to be so successful in many places, to die and be forgotten. In her modesty, she had no foregleam of the afterglow of praise and public testimony to her worth that was to follow the setting of her sun. Speaking once, near the end, with great pleasure, of Mrs. Paine's successful work in Newport and New York, she added, sadly, "They must increase, but I must decrease." But at last she was "ready not to do," able to give all up and repose in perfect peace upon the Father.

She had always thought much of Christmas, always remembered her friends' birthdays. Her skilful fingers and untiring industry made the slender means go a long way in devising innumerable tasteful presents on these days for a large circle of friends. She loved children, and

loved to make them happy, and her little friends were always remembered. This year, a day or two before Christmas, when so weak that only by the closest attention could the feeble, broken utterance be understood, she directed Christmas gifts, prepared long before, sent to all her friends. To one whom she knew needed it, went "Daily Strength for Daily Needs;" to one, a teacher, the little "Seed Thoughts from Browning." "I thought it might help her in her work, tell her." Even her washerwoman and her little girl, and the postman, — "he has brought me a great many letters," she said, — were not forgotten.

A friend took her a Christmas card sent by a little girl. Her feeble vision could barely discern the design. "Birds and flowers," she said; "what could be more beautiful? It cheers me so. Yet I hardly need that. I am very happy and cheerful. I feel that everything is right." Afterwards she spoke of the "Happy, happy Christmas-tide," saying, "We must try to make it bright for the young." To the last, her thoughts were of others.

Having closed all her earthly affairs, she lay awaiting the end in great peace. Sunday, Dec. 27, 1885, in the evening of the peaceful day she always loved, just as her little clock was

striking seven, she passed gently away in sleep. Well may we believe that hers was a joyful wakening into a bright New Year.

Her funeral was attended in the Unitarian Church, December 30, — a service of rare beauty and appropriateness. A thoughtful friend had covered the Tract Table in the vestibule with moss, ferns, and flowers, among which were placed a few tracts. In the church, wreathed with Christmas evergreens, a large concourse of friends assembled. To the strains of the Beethoven Funeral March, the coffin, nearly concealed beneath emblematic palm branches and lilies, was borne by the brothers whose loving-kindness had brightened all the life now ended, to its resting-place beneath the pulpit, close to the front seat where, for so many years, Miss Ellis's familiar form had never been missing. The choir, composed of young friends of hers in the church, sang the first three verses of "Nearer, my God, to Thee," and Whittier's appropriate hymn, "Another hand is beckoning us."

From the text, "She is not dead, but sleepeth," Rev. George A. Thayer paid a just and beautiful tribute to the spirit passed from our midst. To few, he said, could these words of Jesus be so fittingly applied. Though seemingly dead,

she would live in ever-increasing power in the influence she had exerted over other lives. If, from cities and villages far away, from lonely farm-houses, all could to-day be assembled within these walls who had received help and strength from her, large indeed would be the concourse. More truly of her than of most might it be said that she had

> "joined the choir invisible
> Of those immortal dead who live again
> In minds made better by their presence."

It would be well could we all imitate her example in cultivating a love of religious reading, and that habit of religious meditation and communion which was the source of her strength. Her leading characteristic was conscience, an all-dominating power of conscience. Whatever she felt it her duty to do, that she did, at all costs. He closed by reading Bryant's

THE CONQUEROR'S GRAVE.

Within this lowly grave a Conqueror lies,
And yet the monument proclaims it not,
Nor round the sleeper's name hath chisel wrought
The emblems of a fame that never dies,—
Ivy and amaranth, in a graceful sheaf,
Twined with the laurel's fair, imperial leaf.

A simple name alone,
To the great world unknown,
Is graven here, and wild-flowers, rising round,
Meek meadow-sweet and violets of the ground,
Lean lovingly against the humble stone.

Here, in the quiet earth, they laid apart
No man of iron mould and bloody hands,
Who sought to wreak upon the cowering lands
The passions that consumed his restless heart;
But one of tender spirit and delicate frame,
Gentlest in mien and mind,
Of gentle womankind
Timidly shrinking from the breath of blame:
One in whose eyes the smile of kindness made
Its haunt, like flowers by sunny brooks in May,
Yet, at the thought of others' pain, a shade
Of sweeter sadness chased the smile away.

Nor deem that when the hand that moulders here
Was raised in menace, realms were chilled with fear
And armies mustered at the sign, as when
Clouds rise on clouds before the rainy East—
Gray captains leading bands of veteran men
And fiery youths to be the vulture's feast.
Not thus were waged the mighty wars that gave
The victory to her who fills this grave.
Alone her task was wrought,
Alone the battle fought;
Through that long strife her constant hope was stayed
On God alone, nor looked for other aid.

She met the hosts of sorrow with a look
That altered not beneath the frown they wore,
And soon the lowering brood were tamed, and took,
Meekly, her gentle rule, and frowned no more.
Her soft hand put aside the assaults of wrath,
And calmly broke in twain
The fiery shafts of pain,
And rent the nets of passion from her path.
By that victorious hand despair was slain;
With love she vanquished hate, and overcame
Evil with good, in her Great Master's name.

Her glory is not of this shadowy state,
Glory that with the fleeting season dies;
But when she entered at the sapphire gate,
What joy was radiant in celestial eyes!
How Heaven's bright depths with sounding welcomes rung,
And flowers of Heaven by shining hands were flung!
And He who, long before,
Pain, scorn, and sorrow bore,
The Mighty Sufferer, with aspect sweet,
Smiled on the timid stranger from his seat;
He who returning, glorious, from the grave,
Dragged Death, disarmed, in chains, a crouching slave.

See, as I linger here, the sun grows low;
Cool airs are murmuring that the night is near.
O gentle sleeper, from thy grave I go
Consoled though sad, in hope and yet in fear.

Brief is the time, I know,
The warfare scarce begun, —
Yet all may win the triumphs thou hast won.
Still flows the fount whose waters strengthened thee,
The victors' names are yet too few to fill
Heaven's mighty roll; the glorious armory,
That ministered to thee, is open still.

On the pleasant slope of a lovely hillside in Spring Grove, where everything around breathes of Nature's peace and repose, among graves very dear to her, the worn body was laid to rest, while the gentle winter rain fell not unkindly into the open grave. Much seemed to have gone out of the world when the echoing clods covered that which was "Miss Ellis."

The Sunday after her death, as some of her friends were sadly trying to replace the tracts in the table drawer just as she would have liked them arranged, a white dove flew down and rested on the window-sill outside. Only a coincidence, but one that touched us, nevertheless. If the spirits of the departed ever revisit earth, surely Miss Ellis would return to the church she loved so much; and possibly it is not wholly fancy that still feels her in her old-time seat under the pulpit.

As soon as possible after Miss Ellis's death the Women's Auxiliary Conference of Cincinnati

prepared a four-page leaflet, containing a brief sketch of her life and death, and sent it to all her correspondents, many of whom were ignorant that she was even in ill health. The little memorial's first page reads: —

In Memoriam.

SALLIE ELLIS.

December 27, 1885.

So many worlds, so much to do,
So little done, such things to be,
How know I what had need of thee,
For thou wert strong as thou wert true.
Tennyson.

It reprinted from "Unity," Jan. 9, 1886, this tender tribute from a personal friend and a member of the Women's Auxiliary: —

SALLIE ELLIS.

She only did what lay at hand, —
Work that her own hand found to do:
With no thought of a "mission" grand,
Yet, bit by bit, her mission grew.

She did — what others left undone;
She gleaned behind the harvesters:
The scattered ears of grain let stand
By careless ones, — all these were hers.

Patient, unresting, still she wrought,
Though life beat fainter and more faint:
And only as her soul took flight,
We saw — the aureole of the Saint.

ALICE WILLIAMS BROTHERTON.

CINCINNATI, OHIO.

The memorial closed as follows: —

"At the regular monthly meeting of the Women's Auxiliary Conference of Cincinnati, Jan. 12, 1886, the programme for this meeting was omitted, and the afternoon devoted to tender recollection of the dear friend and valued secretary so recently taken from us, to the reading of many letters from East and West containing loving tribute to her worth and sympathy for our loss, and to devising such plans for continuing our work in future as should be our friend's best commemoration, the tribute she would chiefly have desired. Mrs. George A. Thayer offered the following expression of the feeling of our Society, for entry on our records: —

"'It is fitting that we should place upon the records of this Association some words of grateful remembrance of our late fellow-worker and Secretary, Sallie Ellis, who went up higher on Sunday, Dec. 27, 1885.

"'She was called to her office four years and a half ago, and took up its work from the beginning as one who felt its consecration, and saw the opportunity it offered of being a ministry of the highest things to many souls

yearning for a word of religion both reasonable and spiritual.

"'Her long and loving study of Unitarian principles gave her a rare fitness for teaching others the *thought* of our church. Her personal faith in the deep things of God enabled her to speak ever the needed word to inquirers of the *religion* of our church. And her sacred sense of duty, not only illustrated in every act of her life, but shining always through her written words, made her an admirable exemplar of the *moral quality* of our church. So she was all that we could ask as our missionary leader, for she not only taught the stranger from afar of the surpassing beauty and greatness of our Liberal Christianity, but she quickened in us at home new love for its truths, and a deeper sense of our privilege and obligations in being of its disciples.

"'In her life she guided and inspired us, and being dead she abides with us, ever a constant presence, to make us humble that we do so little for our great work, and to stir in us desire to be more faithful to our task in the Master's vineyard.'

"The following extract from a letter of directions left by Miss Ellis in the event of her death was then read: —

"'All the books in the loan library I bequeath to the use of the church, and when not so used, my family shall have the disposal of them.'

"This library comprises over one hundred and thirty religious books, chiefly by Unitarian authors. It was voted that this library 'shall always be known as The Sallie Ellis Loan Library.'

"Mrs. M. E. Hunert, 177 Betts Street, Cincinnati, was appointed Corresponding Secretary. All communications may hereafter be addressed to her. She will continue the free distribution of Unitarian papers, tracts, and sermons, to any names furnished her of persons desiring them. She will also receive subscriptions for Unitarian publications and sell books, when desired, and will loan the books of the Sallie Ellis Loan Library, the borrower paying the postage only. It is earnestly wished to continue Miss Ellis's work in her spirit, and it is hoped correspondents and friends will co-operate with us in this effort.

"Though saddened and greatly bereft, the Cincinnati Auxiliary would still strive to 'look forward and not back,' working on in the spirit of Whittier's poem,

OUR SAINTS.

From the eternal silence rounding
All unsure and starlight here,
Voices of our lost ones sounding,
Bid us be of heart and cheer,
Through the silence, down the spaces,
Falling on the inward ear.

Let us draw their mantles o'er us,
Which have fallen in our way:
Let us do the work before us
Calmly, bravely, while we may,
Ere the long night-silence cometh,
And with us it is not day!"

The "In Memoriam" called out letters of deep regret — the regret of those who mourn a personal friend — from every correspondent. A few of these letters appear in the correspondence, selected from many of similar tenor.

CORRESPONDENCE.

The letters of Miss Ellis's correspondents here given are selected from an immense number of like purport and interest. She had kept all the significant letters neatly filed in bundles, each correspondent by himself. It has been a disappointment to receive so few, comparatively, of her own letters. Our busy age is not given to saving its letters. It is therefore all the more touching to know that so many of her correspondents have treasured even every postal card from her hand. Her letters given here, however, well illustrate her spirit and ideas on many topics, also her method of work, and reveal something of the secret of her success.

Literary style and fine effects were the last things aimed at in her letters. Their characteristics are plainness, directness, intense earnestness to convince and impress, and a warm sympathy with people of all kinds and degrees. Strongly conservative in her own theology, she yet did not set up her views as a fixed standard

for others, or assume to hold all truth. Some of her warmest friends were among our younger, more radical ministers, whose purity and sincerity of life and faith quite offset in her eyes their theological vagaries.

The letters first given are to fellow-workers who had asked about her methods, materials, etc. In an article which Mr. Gannett had asked her to write, and which appeared in "Unity," March 1, 1884, she wrote: —

"We keep a standing weekly advertisement in two of our chief daily papers, — those which have the widest circulation, one Saturday morning, and the other Sunday, under the head of 'Religious Notices.' One of these papers advertises free for us.[1]

"On receiving an application we respond, being guided somewhat by the style and character of the application, by sending one or two tracts, with a copy of the 'Christian Register' or 'Unity.' [Many people of the church, after reading their religious papers, handed them to Miss Ellis for distribution.] After sending the papers and various tracts for several weeks, we write a postal of inquiry as to whether Unitarian literature is satisfactory; and if the person cares to subscribe to either of the papers, *which* he or

[1] The advertisement read thus: "Unitarian papers, tracts, etc., sent free to any one addressing Miss Sallie Ellis, Auburn Ave."

she prefers; which tracts have given the most satisfaction; and whether they care to borrow any books by mail, paying the postage on them. Frequently we receive no reply [in which case the name was dropped], but mostly the answer is gratifying. If the person cannot subscribe for the papers, but enjoys them, we continue to send them. . . . In sending tracts, we begin with 'Unitarian Principles and Doctrines,' by Rev. C. A. Brigham, the 'New Hampshire Statement of Belief,' and 'What Do Unitarians Believe?' by Rev. C. W. Wendte, — because we wish to show what our faith has grown from, and what it is now. These we think fairly represent the denomination; and we have found that they all give general satisfaction. Next, 'Why Am I a Unitarian?' by James F. Clarke, D. D., which is also well liked, and 'Discourse on Distinguishing Opinions of Unitarians,' by William E. Channing, D. D., as creating a thirst for his 'Works.' Then we branch off from this into whatever we think best. . . . *Promptness* in replying and *regularity* in sending papers, etc., will do more towards showing our deep interest in the work, and bring the individual seeking into vital connection with the church sending the literature. A *little* at a time frequently, to insure *careful* and *thorough* reading. Recommend books extensively. . . . We believe in loaning the books of the early ministers of our denomination as a good stepping-stone to the Unitarianism now taught in our pulpits."

In a letter to Miss F. L. Roberts, of Chicago, then Secretary of Western Women's Unitarian Conference, March 14, 1884, she wrote: —

"I agree with you that no *one* tract or sermon will satisfy the questions of inquirers. They have to 'grow into the light,' as we all have done and still are doing. Did any one thing settle our doubts or questionings? I think not.

"'What is our *aim* in the Post Office Mission Work?' It occurs to me it should be to give inquirers the fairest statement of our teachings, from Channing up to the present time. Not the thought of any one man or woman, but that of the greatest number of our best minds in the several eras of our denomination. In many cases . . . people have not the *slightest* idea what Unitarianism is, farther than that we do not believe Christ was God. They not only do not know what we believe, but think us a kind of 'outcasts.' It almost seems like being in the Dark Ages of the world to hear of such ignorance as we *know* exists with regard to our doctrines. Therefore we are talking, as it were, to children. Let us then begin at first principles, and send fair, clear statements."

After alluding to several of her correspondents who were thinking of entering the Unitarian ministry, she adds: —

"It seems to me the A. U. A. tracts, and the books, papers, etc., sent with them, have produced good

results; have made deep, earnest thinkers. It is through these very things our own ministers have been made to think, and they have gone beyond these same things; and so will our correspondents in time. But at present few of them have access to books, or come in contact with people who can converse on all these points with them; therefore it is well to intersperse with our tracts on doctrines, good *practical* sermons, and the newer tracts occasionally, leading them up gradually to Unitarian ideas, and showing them especially that while we *have* doctrines in our church, character is the most important to us. There is no one book that has done more effective work than Rev. J. F. Clarke's 'Orthodoxy,' etc., which proves that we need good, *clear*, strong doctrine. [The Post Office Mission, she adds] is only a larger church, and we want to bring these people into vital connection with us, — making not Unitarians of them, or merely intellectual men and women, but practical Christians working with us and for humanity. Rev. —— is the prophet of his age. We shall all *grow up* to his ideal some day, and bring our Post Office Mission members with us. Hope he will be willing to wait. 'It is good that a man should both hope and quietly wait' (Lam. iii. 26)."

A bit from another letter to Miss Roberts is interesting as showing the untiring industry which enabled Miss Ellis to accomplish so much: —

. . . "Next week we hold our fair, and I shall be very busy all the week. Have had so many orders for mittens, that I am a perfect knitting machine. I can knit and read, however, and therefore have looked over many sermons for distribution in the mean time. Am tired, and thankful for the blessed Saturday night followed by the quiet of Sunday."

In answer to a letter of inquiry from Miss F. Le Baron when that lady first entered on her work as Secretary of the Western Women's Unitarian Conference at Chicago, Dec. 2, 1884, Miss Ellis wrote: —

"'How much time do you give to all this work?' Doing it at home, I cannot calculate exactly, for there are many moments thrown in that I cannot well count; but this much I *can* say. I begin about 9 A. M. Monday to collect my materials about me, and usually by dinner-time (1 P. M.) I have put away all papers, etc., and have ready my week's papers, etc., for the postman to take. Nearly every evening I write an hour or more, excepting Sunday, when I won't write business letters. This is all the work I can *calculate;* but there are many moments spent reading my letters, assorting papers, tying up books, setting down items, making purchases, etc., besides the time spent Sunday and on Wednesday at the church, over the library, etc. However, I am very systematic in everything, and accomplish more in that way. . . . Of course, new applicants I reply to at once; but every new applicant is then

added to my Monday list. Being at an office, you have more interruptions; and then deafness has its reward, and one can pursue her work in peace many times, whereas another would be disturbed."

In answer to another letter from Miss Le Baron, full of warm congratulations on her success, she writes, Dec. 11, 1884: —

"I am very much obliged for your high opinion of me. I read it to a dear friend, who always sends me to the Conference at Chicago, and she said, 'It 's all true, but I hope you won't get so far above me in the next world.' I never have stopped to 'understand' what I am doing, or the 'name' I am making. To do the good comes from my heart, and I leave the results to the Good Father, and know if I merit a reward it will be given me. It is a pleasure in *this* world, to feel I am giving satisfaction to so many in the denomination. I am a thorough Unitarian, and have read our denominational works more than anything else, which has prepared me for this very work. I am an ignoramus in literature outside of Unitarianism, only that you cannot be a Unitarian and not come, more or less, in contact with general literature. . . . By the way, I always read tracts, and M. J. Savage's and Chadwick's and Clarke's weekly sermons, going to and from the city [Miss Ellis was living at this time in Avondale, three miles from the city], and carry *big* packages of papers home on Sunday. Think the conductors must know I am a missionary."

Rev. Joseph May, Rev. Charles Allen, and Rev. F. L. Hosmer sent Miss Ellis many of their printed sermons for distribution, which did good service. Rev. William C. Gannett early saw the possibilities of this work, and has done much to systematize and further it in many ways. He christened it the "Post Office Mission," and, seeing the need of more fresh material for distribution, devised and edited the "Church Door Pulpit" series of sermons, and has also been the chief promoter of the "Unity Mission" series of tracts. The following extracts are from Miss Ellis's letters to him.

SEPTEMBER 12, 1882.

Received to-day, from ——, your letter of September 5, asking about our "Missionary Work by Letter." . . . I will very gladly afford you my assistance in that respect. However, I am rather more conservative than yourself, — rather of the E. S. Gannett type, — still have visited Omaha, where I have had brothers settled, and know some little of the style of religion which is requisite in the Northwest. . . . Will give you a list of the tracts I have used most profitably. Most people state, when they ask for literature, "Want something that teaches the *doctrines* of the Unitarian Church." Thereupon I have forwarded, from time to time, "Unitarian Doctrines and Principles" (Brigham); "Word of God" and "The Rising Star of the Lib-

eral Faith" (W. P. Tilden); "New Hampshire Statement of Belief;" "Unitarian Belief in Bible Language;" "Why Am I a Unitarian?" "Inspiration of New Testament," "Revivals" (Clarke); "Our Common Christianity" (A. P. Stanley); "Mission of Unitarianism" (Heber Newton); "Spiritual Christianity," (Starr King); and "What Do Unitarians Believe?" (C. W. Wendte). . . . The serial sermons of Chadwick, Clarke, Hale, and Savage always gladly received. . . . But do not be afraid of a little doctrine, Mr. Gannett, for there are some people in Orthodox churches who are hungering and thirsting for just our doctrines. They cannot do without doctrine just yet, but want something better than they have known, and think it a great blessing to find it. I try my congregation to see what each requires, and lead them on and *up*. *My* church is composed of a very mixed set. . . . I am deeply interested in this work, and know we have done much good. . . . We keep books to loan, and also recommend books from time to time, and ask our correspondents to subscribe to the periodicals. . . . Dr. Dewey's sermons on "Human Nature" and "Human Life," and his "Two Great Commandments" benefit some people very much.

MARCH 11, 1883.

I never omit the "Pulpit" column [of the Register], and read "Wrestling and Blessing" with much interest. . . . I set each difficulty down as just suited for some one, or two, or three of my correspondents. Of course, I *don't apply sermons to myself any more*. It is

a beautiful sermon; and this brings me to the point we are all so interested in, — the wider circulation of the fresh thoughts of all the pulpits. I surely think, with you, that it will help the work to "give it name." Am glad you are stirring them all up. I do not, as you say, feel the need of it so much, but occasionally do. . . . A new case in Tennessee, who never knew *anything* of the Liberal Church, till we sent him papers. Is much pleased, and wants to read till he knows still more about us. He writes, "Not one per cent of the people here know there is such a church. Tell me, do the majority of Unitarian ministers believe in the resurrection of Jesus; that he healed the leper, cast out devils, and raised Lazarus? I ask for information, and hope you will reply at some future time." He is evidently in a benighted region. Says he has "heard nothing outside the Cumberland Presbyterian, Baptist, and Methodist Churches, and am none of these;" and I presume is very little of anything yet, and is longing for a nobler life than he has known, or sees about him. The longer I go on, the more need I see of getting this work fully and well organized. It will be brought about ere long. Even reading over papers is beneficial. The publication of our hymns, the most inspiring, will do a great deal of good. In several cases I have copied them, and to good purpose.

Jan. 20, 1885, in answer to the question, what twenty names she would prefer in the

"Church Door Pulpit" series the coming year, she wrote: —

"Revs. Grindall Reynolds, Rush R. Shippen, J. F. Clarke, E. E. Hale, Joseph May, Dr. William Furness, H. W. Bellows, T. Starr King, J. Ll. Jones, J. T. Sunderland, George Bachelor, William C. Gannett, F. L. Hosmer, David Utter, George A. Thayer, C. W. Wendte, S. J. Barrows, Albert Walkley, J. C. Learned, James Martineau. Am afraid I have n't left any room for those who do not bear the 'Unitarian' name, but feel that Unitarianism is so little known, that I would first make our own best writers known, and then branch out and take in others. All of the above names I should like to see in 'Church Door Pulpit' for 1885–1886. . . . I think generally people wish to become acquainted with the Unitarian pulpit. 'What do Unitarians preach?' is the cry. 'I want to hear a *Unitarian*;' 'those who have been educated in that denomination.'"

FEBRUARY 20, 1885.

Your article in "Unity," February 16, on "A Blessing on the Day," pleased me very much. . . . We have n't quite the right book yet, and with you I say, "about twelve verses from the Bible well knitted around some central thought," as we principally want to become acquainted with the Bible as the "Book of man." Think something more like "Daily Praise and Prayer," with different Scripture selections, perhaps, and omitting most of the prayers. I would only have a prayer

to lead to a prayer of one's own, — that is, to inspire one to pray in their own words. Have often thought I should like to compile a book of "Daily Worship" from the Scriptures, our Hymn Books, "Daily Praise and Prayer," "Day unto Day," "Helps to Devout Living," and the "Responsive Service," and now, from "Daily Strength for Daily Needs," "Aspirations of the World," and "Spiritual Life" in the "Register," but principally Scripture selections. . . . "Daily Praise and Prayer" is doing much good in a very troublesome family of one of my correspondents. I remembered to have sent the lady "Wrestling and Blessing," and wrote a short time since to call her attention to the "Inherited Burden," asking if she still had the tract. This morning received a reply, in which she wrote, "Yes! I still have 'Wrestling and Blessing,' for it did me so much good when I first read it that I felt as if I could not part with it." Many, many homes need "A Blessing on the Day" to create the true feeling.

To Miss Holmes, of the Davenport, Iowa, Post Office Mission, Miss Ellis wrote: —

August 20, 1884.

. . . Yes, I do use the A. U. A. tracts freely, and more than any others, those marked on our list herein enclosed, and also "Word of God," "The Doctrine of Prayer," and "Wrestling and Blessing," — the latter to those who need encouragement particularly. I find generally that people want to get at the first

principles, — the A B C of Unitarianism. We do not use Higginson's "Sympathy of Religion" at all. Our aim is to make practical Unitarians, and let doctrines and theory gradually fall into the secondary place. Therefore I object to Mr. ——'s list of books, because they are more historical and theoretical. They do well where one wants to study religion; but where one wants a Christianity to live by, I think something that comes down to practical life, or that is more simple, better adapted to the generality of people. As knowledge of Unitarianism spreads, they will naturally seek deeper works. But at present, something as clear and concise as possible, with the "Christian Register," "Unity," and the "Dayspring," which further illustrate our principles, we find very popular. The difficulty is to get a large enough supply and variety enough. The A. U. A. tracts only answer as an explanation, and we must have the sermons, and papers, and books enough in addition. As I have been at the work for three years, it is hard work to find sufficient supplies for between thirty and forty every week, and these extending the papers and tracts elsewhere.

I cannot think, with Mr. Judy, that it is the best method to divide the work. It seems to me that causes confusion. It seems a much better way that the person who sends the tracts and papers should distribute the books too, as being better able to advise the books to read; for he or she learns the "bent of mind" of the seeker. So many different

persons at work causes confusion and mistakes. I mail papers, tracts, etc., attend to all the correspondence, to loaning and mailing the books, to all printed matter received, to all the advertising orders of every kind, to money received and expended, — consulting the President frequently, and the details are brought up before our monthly meetings. I do not believe the work can be so well done as by one person; but of course no one could devote so much time to it unless they have some compensation for it. I took up the work at first voluntarily, but soon found there was a great deal in it, and therefore wished to give it earnest attention, and the ladies felt me particularly fitted for it, and preferred to give me a small salary. It never is "irksome" to me, but a work of real love to me. I have always been a missionary, — distributing all the papers and tracts which contained anything of a practical nature or of a pure Christianity.

To Miss Holmes.

August 29, 1884.

Have just been re-reading "A Little Pilgrim." To tell you the plain truth, the ideas are beautiful, but I do not like prying into the next world. No one really knows anything concerning it. I am willing to rest where Jesus left us. He told us little of it, but enough for the "health of our souls." "In our Father's house are many mansions. I go to prepare a place for you;" and I believe when our friends leave us

they go to another division of God's kingdom and "prepare a place for us," in that through their deaths we are naturally drawn heavenward, and our lives are different from ever before. I am not so much interested as to what the future world is. It is enough to me, to know that it *is*, and that I am doing the best I can while I am living here. The future world will be made plain to me when my time comes to go there; and if I have only lived rightly here, there will be nothing to fear.

I can trust in God. Still such books seem to be necessary to some persons, but I do not consider them healthy reading. When you have finished such a book the query comes, "Is it fact?" Who can say it is? I feel that my friends are in the hands of a loving Father as they were while on earth, and that he will still do for them what is best, and their spirit and affection remain with us to comfort and guide us. I never lose them. They are only "gone before."

Miss Ellis to Rev. A. A. Livermore.

JUNE 2, 1880.

MY DEAR FRIEND, — Many thanks for your kind letter of Mar. 29th, though I never saw the "P. S." — which, as usual with all postscripts, contained the best part of the letter — till a month afterwards, when in house-cleaning I was assorting letters received, I noticed the last page of your letter, which was like receiving a new letter, and came in very opportune; for we have

had so much to depress us of late, that I was glad to have my attention called to Philippians, which contains so much that is cheering. There has been a good deal to occupy my time and thoughts since your very kind letter reached me; but I will not allow your college term to close without sending you my kind word, though I cannot be personally present at the Ohio Conference and Meadville exercises. May you have charming weather, and a satisfactory gathering, is my sincere wish. Rev. William H. Channing's visit here was highly appreciated by his old friends and the early members of the church, and we all particularly enjoyed the Communion. It was truly a communion with the departed, and very beautiful to us. I did not have the pleasure of meeting Mr. Channing excepting a few moments at Mrs. Ryland's, which I regretted exceedingly; but it was a disappointment I could not alter.

—— and wife moved to Mt. Auburn to-day, there to make a bright, beautiful home for themselves, which is as it should be; but we who are left at home feel rather sad. The last of my dear mother's five little children has gone from me, and it is not so easy to enter into their homes and have my brothers and sisters what they were to me in our own family circle. Still all is right and best as it is; and though clouds gather over our heads, the sunshine will at length make itself seen, for "all things work together for good." I am going to be gay and spend the summer with —— in Philadelphia; and as we have not met for eight years, we shall enjoy a quiet summer together.

October 1, 1884.

. . . Thanks for your kind sympathy for us in our sorrow. Thanks to you for the solid foundation you laid when our dear mother died, which has given me a firm faith in the hour of trial. I firmly believe that "all things work together for good," and that dear C——'s long sickness prepared her family, herself, and all of us for her death. There was much in her sickness and death that was beautiful and comforting. It was pleasant after so many days of suffering to see her at rest; and we feel it must have been a happy release to her too, for her face in death bore no trace of the pain she had endured, of which we were glad, for she looked so natural and sweetly that we could allow her two youngest children to look at "mamma asleep, to wake up an angel in heaven." C—— never wanted her children to have a horror of death, and her desire has been granted. They have no other idea than that the Good Father released their dear mother from pain and she is an angel in heaven. An Episcopalian minister officiated at the funeral, as C—— always preferred that service. He was a personal friend of hers and my brother E——'s. My brother's widow came from —— to attend the funeral, and she requested that I select a piece to be read in case they found no one to lead in a hymn. I selected your hymn, — "A holy air is breathing round." It was read in the middle of the service, very impressively, and was particularly comforting to N——'s widow and myself, as you had officiated at our mother's funeral and had baptized

C—— and N——. (Do you remember the day you baptized me and my three brothers and C—— at the Masonic Hall?) The children scattered flowers over the graves; A——, ten years old, said on returning from the cemetery, "Papa, it was all beautiful, no dread or gloom about it. It was just as mamma would have had it." And so it was. The children will always feel the life hereafter a reality. "More homelike is the vast unknown," since their mamma is there. The piece "At noontide," in last week's "Register," applies to dear C——'s death as well as if written for her. It is beautiful. I want it in a leaflet to distribute, as I have opportunity frequently for just such words. Yes! I help on "Unity," the "Register," and "Our Best Words." . . . Hope I am making Christians, and not merely Liberals or merely Unitarians. Think we are gaining ground with many; but the literature must be distributed with great care, I feel with you. . . . We are glad to have the Thayers home again, and will probably begin to work earnestly next week.

JANUARY 4, 1885.

. . . Thanksgiving and Christmas were rather sad days to us this year, without our dear C——, who always did so much to make the days bright for all about her. Pa, mother, and myself dined both days with C——'s family. Christmas was made a happy day for the children by all our kind friends, and we could but feel their mother was looking upon them, with a bright and happy face, in gratitude to all

those who had endeavored to make her dear ones so happy. I have been very busy this winter, for the correspondents still claim my time. Young —— still appears interested, and I hope he may be able to enter college this year, for he appears to feel his isolation there much. No sympathetic person about him nearer than Mr. Barnes of Montreal. . . . Unity Club flourishes, so does the Day Nursery and Women's Auxiliary Conference. The fair was a pleasant occasion, and now we are all feeling cheered in having Mrs. T—— better again. I always see A—— at the window as I pass there on my way to church. He is a lovely little boy. He looks as if he *wanted* to know "Miss Ellis;" but I doubt if he does, without his mother to call attention to her. Hope you all passed pleasant holidays at Meadville. I must close to write to Aunt ——, who always looks for a Sunday letter from me. [This was an aged blind aunt.]

Miss Ellis's first Post Office Mission correspondent was a young man in Ravenna, Ohio, Mr. Julius Woodruff. His first letter to her said:

"Thank you for your kindness in sending me the 'Christian Register.' I am much pleased with the paper, and may become a subscriber at no distant day. I received copies of Mr. Wendte's sermon, 'What do Unitarians Believe?' I have distributed them where I thought they would do the most good, and have reason to think that good was accomplished. Before

long I will send to you for more books; and if I can help you in obtaining subscribers to the 'Register' I will gladly do so. I am not a member of any church, and stand almost alone in the church I attend [Methodist], in my views. Our people seem to be almost entirely divided into three classes; namely, the strictly Orthodox, the wholly indifferent or non-thinking class, and the ultra Liberal. I am in sympathy with neither; and I know of only a few, all young boys like myself, who occupy middle ground. I can almost *fully* indorse the views expressed by Rev. C W. Wendte in the sermon to which I have referred; and believing his views to be right, I take pleasure in giving them as wide a circulation as I can. In many respects I admire Ingersoll; but I have no sympathy with the so-called 'Liberal League' with which he is connected, and which has an auxiliary league in this county.

". . . If I understand the theory and purpose of your church, I shall be glad to render the cause any service in my power; and if I can be of any service as an auxiliary to your Missionary Society, I have only to be instructed in the ways thereof."

As such auxiliary he acted, distributing tracts, papers, etc., with a zeal that might well shame some life-long Unitarians. In later letters he wrote: —

"Outside of all churches there is quite a number of men, mostly young, intelligent men, who have cultivated an intense hatred of certain doctrines and reli-

gious observances, and who have gradually come to denounce and seek the overthrow of our whole religious system. These are banded together as an auxiliary to the 'Liberal League' of America. In addition to these are a number of young men, sons of Orthodox parents, who dissent from the religious views and peculiar creeds which have satisfied their elders, and yet have no definite faith of their own. I think that with these two classes, as well as with those who have so far been indifferent to the claim of religion, we have an excellent prospect of success in introducing our views and extending the influence of Liberal Christianity. I am very friendly to the Orthodox Church, recognizing the noble purpose that animates them all, and the invaluable services that they have rendered to mankind; and I have less desire to draw upon their strength than I have to see the Unitarian Church built up from material that has formerly been identified with *no* church organization. I was a Unitarian in theory long before I knew anything of the Unitarian Church. . . . As a rule, the young men of my acquaintance who are, either in theory or practice, liberal Christians, are of the most intelligent order, ambitious, progressive young men; and of *them* what may we not hope?"

He went into business in Leadville, Colorado, and from there wrote Miss Ellis (in 1881): —

"Sunday is almost entirely ignored in the business portion of the city, very few men closing their places

of business. Every saloon and theatre is open on Sunday, and brass bands fill the air with their inspiring music. I attended the Methodist Episcopal Church Sabbath School last Sunday, and found quite a respectable crowd in attendance. I thoroughly enjoyed that afternoon; and when I saw rough-bearded, grimy, slouchy-looking men and boys from the mines and workshops taking part in the exercises of the school, I thanked God for the influence his church and school had had upon the largest, hardest mining-camp in the world. . . . If you have any more of the documents referred to, I wish you would send me a dozen or more, and a few of the pamphlets on 'What Do Unitarians Believe?' It seems to me this would be a most fruitful field in which to plant Unitarian ideas and principles. It seems to me no other church would be so popular here. Of the party of ten young men who board with me, I do not think that any one of them has been in a church three times since he came to Leadville. In most respects, all of them are fine young men; but Orthodox doctrines would never gain any ground with them, while Liberal ideas might win the field if the boys could be made to consider them."

Miss Ellis, and all the ladies, indeed, of the Cincinnati Auxiliary, were greatly interested in Leadville, and hoped to do a good work there, aided by our enthusiastic young friend; but the above was destined to be our last letter from him. In September, 1881, came a postal card from a

hotel clerk, saying, "Mr. Woodruff wishes me to inform you that he has been unable to answer your letter on account of sickness, but will write you as soon as able." A few days later came intelligence of his death. Tributes to his character in the Ravenna newspapers, and his photograph sent Miss Ellis by his sister, only confirmed our opinion of this young man's noble character, and our sincere grief at his loss. Miss Ellis at once wrote to his mother this letter: —

OCTOBER 17, 1881.

I shall be compelled to address the envelope containing this note to your daughter, not knowing your husband's name. I presume you are aware that Miss —— informed me of your son's death, and she, I presume, sent me so kindly the paper last week containing the obituary on him which I read with much interest, as it was such an opinion as I and all of us had formed of your son, Julius, from his interesting letters. I assure you that our love and sympathy are with you in the affliction, and would that we could soften the severe loss to you; but that alone the good Father in time can render less bitter. True resignation consists in enduring it as God's will.

The ladies of our Missionary Society wish me to tell you how much all were interested in Julius's letters, and how deeply they feel with you, and at my request send you a book of consolation, "Light on the Cloud,"

as an expression of our real interest in your son. It seemed to me that nothing could be so appropriate as the literature he so learned to love. "He being dead yet speaketh" (Heb. xi. 4); and such we deem would be his words to those who were so dear to him. The President of our society marked one piece, —"He giveth his beloved sleep," and I have marked passages through the book, particularly under the head "Death a Blessing," and the last poem in the book. If words can cheer you, it is our hope that this little gift may serve the purpose. At least may it be a testimonial to you of our deep interest in your dear boy. . . . Our ladies are to hold the first meeting this season a week from to-morrow, when the obituary notice of Julius R. Woodruff's death will be read, and listened to with interest. He was my first correspondent, and his letter from Colorado was particularly enjoyable. It grieves me to think it was the last. . . . Hoping to hear farther from you, dear friend, through your daughter or Miss ——, and to have the pleasure of becoming personally acquainted with you at some future day, with a God's blessing on you one and all, far and near,

Yours in common sorrow, S. Ellis.

The correspondence was continued with Mr. Woodruff's sister as follows: —

November 11, 1881.

. . . Yes, you may call me your "friend," for I truly feel that I have lost a dear and true friend in

your brother, and consequently feel interested in all of his family, and do not wonder that your mother and the whole family are heart-broken to be called to give him up. Am sincerely glad that you felt free to express all your feelings to me, for now I can sympathize more deeply with you. You are just the age I was when my first sorrow came upon me, — the death of my dear mother. As you say, I felt that I must keep up, to cheer my father, who has ever been a domestic man, and the loss of my mother was very hard for him to bear, and the five little children to be cared for, I the oldest daughter at home, and had been my mother's "right-hand man" in the care of the children. But all our sorrows and trials are good for us to bear, and we need the crosses as well as the joys of life to fit us for the life here and for that which is to come.

It was hard to be reconciled to the death of one so young and so good and true as Julius; but we must not be selfish, but think what is our loss is the gain of those taken, many times. He may, through his spiritual influence, still care for and lead you all nearer to God. These "dark hours of life" bring us to know ourselves better; they call out our sympathy for our fellow-men; and, what is more than all, they bring us nearer to God, and thus they are not a mere cross of agony; therefore let us not murmur at our affliction, but still believe that God is good, and will so make our trials serve us that they may become *good* to us. . . . We must trust God, who doeth all

things for the best, and pray for strength and light to be given us. Our prayers may not always be answered as we ask, but they are answered in another way.

"Pray, though the gift you ask for
May never comfort your fears,
May never repay your pleading;
Yet pray, and with hopeful tears.
An answer — not that you sought for,
But diviner — will come one day:
Your eyes are too dim to see it;
Yet strive, and wait, and pray."[1]

"How shalt thou bear the cross which now
So dread a weight appears?
Keep quietly to God, and think
Upon the Eternal Years.

"Bear gently, suffer like a child,
Nor be ashamed of tears;
Kiss the sweet cross, and in thy heart
Sing of the Eternal Years."[2]

The whole of Whittier's "Angels of Grief" and a poem by Ellerton are copied in addition.

The correspondence was continued, occasionally, during Miss Ellis's life. Aug. 11, 1882, she wrote: —

"Young women, Miss ——, have great influence over young men, and I hope you struggle to improve

[1] A. A. Procter. [2] Faber.

all those whom you know. Have you ever come across Frances Power Cobbe's 'Duties of Women'? It is a remarkably sensible book, and I feel as if every young girl ought to read it. I think you would do your young friends a service by owning it and passing it around among them. You can get it in paper for twenty-five cents. It is not a doctrinal work at all. She delivered the lectures in London, to women. Neither is it a Woman's Rights book altogether, but what any girl or young man, come to that, ought to do and practise. Are you going to resume school after vacation again, or what do you intend to turn your attention to?

"I have not been very strong since I was sick last August, therefore have not done much this year. I go into the city every two weeks on Saturday A.M., to be at the church to loan books to any one who desires them. Was there last Saturday, and two strange ladies came in who proved very pleasant; one a young girl. She came after 'Helps to Devout Living,' for a sister who has gone out to Nebraska for her health, and is miles away from any church and has no companionable people about her. This young sister also selected for herself 'Day unto Day,' as a book of daily study in an upward path. It is such pleasant work to have it within my power to loan and to recommend so many good books to those who have not read them. They always enjoy them. Julius would have been so happy in it out at Leadville."

Mr. Woodruff's sister wrote, Feb. 15, 1886:

"Some one very kindly sent us the obituary of our dear friend Miss Ellis. We were surprised and deeply grieved to hear of her death, as we did not know that her health was poor even. She said so little about herself, that we never thought of her as otherwise than well and strong. . . . I enjoyed Miss Ellis's letters so much, and we appreciated her kindness in writing to us after my dear brother's death. He thought so much of Miss Ellis, and I know if he had lived you would not have been disappointed in him. I cannot thank you sufficiently for the little book you sent mother after J——'s death. Truly it was a 'Light on the Cloud,' and it comforted mother more than I can tell you. It is so full of comforting words.

"Though Miss Ellis is gone from us, she has left behind the influence of a life so pure, so noble, and so grand, that we will all be the better for having known her. As my brother once wrote in a friend's album, 'God wisely wills that we may not know the number of our years, and in view of the uncertainty which enshrouds each to-morrow, let us so live that be our lives long or short, the little home-world that surrounds us will be the better for our having lived in it.' Can we not say that these two did not live in vain? My brother had a great influence over young people and also over some who were much older than he, and had he been spared, I feel sure that he would have done a grand work for the cause of Christianity. But their life work is ended only too soon; and why they should be taken when they were doing so much good, and

others who are a burden to themselves and others are left, I suppose we shall know sometime; and until that time we must believe that 'He doeth all things well.'"

Miss Ellis's letters frequently express her joy in a young man who had become a Unitarian minister through her efforts. He was a Methodist minister in Ohio, but had grown unable longer to accept the creed of his church. Unhappy, unsettled, and adrift, not knowing where to turn for help, by the merest "chance" he picked up on a railroad car a Cincinnati paper, and his eye fell on the Women's Auxiliary Conference advertisement. He wrote Miss Ellis a postal card, saying: —

"I have seen your notice in the 'Commercial,' offering Unitarian papers and tracts free to persons who may desire to read them. I must confess to more ignorance in regard to Unitarian doctrines than is seemly in a minister of the gospel, and will be thankful indeed if you will kindly favor me with such papers and tracts as may enlighten me ever so little."

Later he wrote: —

"You have helped me not a little in my search for truth. Before I first wrote you for tracts, etc., I knew absolutely nothing of Unitarianism beyond the term, and the fact that Unitarians did not believe Christ to have been God."

Miss Ellis corresponded with him from that time on, loaning many books, etc. It was never her wish or aim to unsettle persons of a fixed faith. She sought rather to reach and help those who, by reading and thinking, had become dissatisfied with the only forms of religious faith known to them, and were consequently drifting into scepticism. Mr.——'s own letters best tell the story. After Miss Ellis's death, he wrote Feb. 3, 1886:

"I had long been wondering why I did not hear from her, but supposed that she found her time so engrossed with her chosen work that she must defer writing until some more convenient season. She had, it is true, hinted at her failing health, but I never dreamed it was so bad. My first intimation of the real state of affairs was the notice of her death. I need not say that I was startled, that I regret our common loss; these are but feeble expressions.

"Through all my life here at Cambridge I have been anticipating the day when, returning West, I should meet her, and in some degree thank her for the help and comfort she brought me in life. This has become such a fixed idea with me, that it is hard to believe, as I write this, that it can never be in this world. It seems very strange that the one friend who did me such a supreme kindness in life I shall never meet.

"She was the very messenger of God to me, and is inseparably associated with the most trying period of

my life. The only conceptions of religion I had ever had were proving unreal and worthless, and no one offered anything as a substitute. As I look back, the peril of my situation seems much greater than it did at the time. I fear I should have become insincere, or, what is perhaps almost as bad, should have fallen into a sort of despairing scepticism. Heaven in mercy saved me from it; but I shall not forget that even Heaven might not have found a way to do this, had there been no Miss Ellis. It was but a little thing, a trifle, a brief notice in a daily paper, that in some way caught a careless reader's eye. But my whole life is changed in consequence.

"And so, while you miss her in her place and in your work, in your church and social life, I, too, here in New England miss her. I feel as if something is gone out of my life and I have really one less reason for returning West when my school work is done. But I have if possible an additional incentive to a good life. I trust I shall hear that your work is still going on successfully. I assure you I shall never lose interest in your Mission, and shall never cease to regard it as in some sense a home into which I was adopted. I sincerely hope I shall never do it any discredit."

In a letter to Mrs. Hunert, Miss Ellis's successor, he says: —

"Accept, please, my hearty congratulations, and my best wishes for your very abundant success. It is a

great work indeed, one that cannot be easily over-estimated, and in which it seems to me you can accomplish a minister's work even, and a very successful minister's work at that. I wonder how large your congregation is now; that is, how many persons are in communication with you and your Mission.

"Of Miss Ellis I shall always think as one of my greatest earthly benefactors, and it will be a life-long regret that I never met her. . . . I wish you would say to Mrs. Smith that I have by me here in New England only the letters received from Miss Ellis since coming to Harvard, and these I fear contain nothing she would like to make use of. The really helpful letters, those that were of most vital interest to me, were written while I was a Methodist preacher in Ohio, and these are back there still, packed up among odds and ends, and practically might almost as well be in the moon. . . . Again accept my best wishes for your success in the new calling, — a divine one in the truest sense of the word. I assure you I shall always be glad to hear of the growth and success of your Mission, all the more, perhaps, because I hold to it a sort of filial relation. You know that in the Methodist Church each young convert or young minister speaks of the minister under whose preaching he was converted, as a spiritual father. So I think of myself now as the spiritual child of your Women's Missionary Society in Cincinnati. Would that Heaven might help me to be worthy of the home, and justify in some sense their loving-kindness and help in time of need."

A gentleman in Kentucky, long a correspondent of Miss Ellis, who had taken papers, bought many books, etc., through her, and who has recently died, wrote of her, Jan. 22, 1886 : —

"Many souls will miss the modest, unassuming, faithful secretary, but her silent labors will be followed by a rich reward. Her memorial is in the hearts and minds of those who were led through her efforts to freedom, fellowship, and character, in religion."

This correspondent was a farmer's wife in Ohio, who, after Miss Ellis's death, wrote : —

"I have had much trouble in the last two years, and would have given up to utter despair many times, if it had not been for her kind letters and sermons. I made a confidential friend of her; so, knowing my situation, she knew what sermons would serve most to strengthen me, and sometimes she would come across sermons in papers that she would cut out and send me. I have them yet, and intend to paste them in a scrapbook. I thought of calling upon her father to see if he had a picture that he would allow me to have a copy from, so I am very glad her portrait will be in the book. . . . I learned to *love* Miss Ellis, and shall *never* forget her."

There was a little family of step-children living on a remote Ohio farm, in whom Miss Ellis took a warm personal interest, advising as to their religious training, sending them children's papers

and books. "Miss Ellis" came to be regarded as a dear friend by these children who never saw her. March 16, 1885, she wrote to the mother: —

"Your letter was received a week since, but I have been sick three weeks with a very severe cough and cold. Have been up and about, but could not accomplish much of anything, and especially writing, and still had much of it to do. . . . Wanted to advise you about the Sunday-school lessons. Order the lessons of 'Home Life' from Chicago at present, and then next, if you can, 'Corner-Stones of Character;' but do not get the 'Old Testament Chart,' for I have some very good lessons on the Old Testament that you will like and can have immediately. . . . Am so sorry you have so much sadness to contend against. However, you must feel that all your sacrifices are known by the good Father in heaven; so to him turn in your hour of need. There is a hymn Mr. Thayer often selects for our opening on Sunday. We sang it last Sunday, — 'Daily Consecration,' by Caroline Mason.

'Oh God! I thank thee for each sight
Of beauty that thy hand doth give:
For sunny skies, and air, and light, —
Oh God, I thank thee that I live!

'That life I consecrate to thee;
And ever, as the day is born,
On wings of joy my soul would flee
To thank thee for another morn:

'Another day in which to cast
Some silent deed of love abroad,
Which, greatening as it journeys past,
May do some earnest work for God.

'Another day to do, to dare;
To use anew my growing strength;
To arm my soul with faith and prayer,
And so win life and thee, at length.'

"Let your first thoughts be turned to God in the morning, and in the day's struggles believe that you are in his presence; and even if your earthly life is not such as you may wish, you may rest assured that your tears are counted above. . . . My own life is much brighter than it was. My brother —— has an only child, three and a half years old, who is very cunning, and much company for us all. On Friday I passed my semi-centennial birthday, which a number of my friends kindly remembered. . . . I was not strong enough to enjoy the occasion fully; but still on the whole it was a bright day to me, and on Sunday I was glad Mr. Thayer selected the beautiful hymn, 'Daily Consecration.' I am too weak to write longer. . . . May God bless and strengthen you for your daily toils."

On the envelopes of all these letters was written, "From my friend Miss Ellis." To the oldest child, who was difficult to influence, Miss Ellis addressed this letter: —

My dear M——: I wonder if you ever had any one write a letter to you, and whether you can read a

letter yourself. If not, your mamma will read it to you. She has told me that you are having a little Sunday-school of your own at home, and I feel quite interested in it, and am going to have two of the lessons sent to your mamma from Chicago, hoping you three children will feel interested in them. One is a very simple thing to learn, — "Rules to make Home Pleasant;" and I hope you will all try to learn them, and try to keep them in your daily life. . . . If children do not learn to keep such rules, they never can have happy homes, for they will grow up into ill-natured, lazy men and women. The other lesson is called "Corner-Stones of Character," because it gives us true ideas of what all children should learn in order to grow up into good, truthful men and women. . . . Now I know you are studying together Brown's "Life of Jesus," and these lessons I am to send you will help you to understand better what Jesus did to make himself, with God's help, become so good a man. I know, too, that you, M——, have a copy of "Daily Praise and Prayer," which is a very good book. It is pleasant to me as I read in mine to think that Mrs. —— and M—— are reading their lesson to-day, and I wonder if they are thinking how beautiful it is, and that "Miss Ellis" and many others are reading and asking God for the same goodness to-day. It is so pleasant, — do you not think so? — to feel that our good Father in heaven and all good, kind people are thinking of us each day. It helps *us* to be good, to know that others are trying in the same way, — do

you not think so? You are the oldest of the three children, and I want to hear from you, that by studying our Sunday-school lessons, and reading in sensible books, and playing with well-behaved children, you are all becoming wiser and better, and helping mamma and each other. I will also send you some verses all the children in our Sunday-school learned one winter. . . . There are many things I could talk to you about, but I must leave the rest till another day. It will be sufficient for you to know that some one on earth feels interested in your life at home, with a kind mother to lead you so well. . . . I will say good-by now, and hope you will learn to write to me. With love to all of you, very kindly your friend.

Miss Ellis corresponded frequently with a young man in Canada (living in a city where, so far as known, he is the only Unitarian), beginning in 1882, and loaning him many books. He, too, was in a state of religious doubt and despair, when chance threw the little advertisement in his way. He intends to enter the Unitarian ministry, as is shown by the following extracts from the correspondence. Miss Ellis wrote him Oct. 21, 1882: —

Monday afternoon I mailed "Religion in Evolution" to you, and I have imagined you eagerly poring over the book this week in high ecstasies. . . . To me James P. Clarke's views and Dr. Furness's seem more

just and reliable. But Dr. Clarke says, "What commends itself best to our reason, must be the truth;" therefore Mr. Savage may benefit you more. If he rouses you to a deep faith and makes you truly Christian, that is the point to be gained. Should like to have you compare James F. Clarke with Mr. Savage, on the Humanity of Jesus and the Miracles and the Resurrection, particularly. "Bible for Learners," Vol. III., takes the same view, about, of the Miracles and Resurrection, — "myths and legends," "not an external fact of history, but simply a form of belief assumed by the faith of his friends and earliest disciples." James F. Clarke, in "Truths and Errors of Orthodoxy," in the chapter Miracles, says, "The resurrection may have been an example of a universal law." Dr. Furness says: "Till men know all the laws of God it is rather presumptuous in them to set the resurrection aside as an impossibility." These are not his exact words; but the purport I have quoted from memory. To return to Dr. Clarke. . . . [Then follows a long extract from Clarke, which is omitted here.] Dr. Clarke's view is the most likely and rational to me; but all the more radical men take the view of the German critics, and look upon it rather as "myths and legends" arising from a simple faith of the disciples. The only way is to read for yourself and compare, forming an opinion of your own, while remembering that Christianity does not rest on a certain belief, but on the life. "What doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to do justly, love mercy,

and walk humbly with thy God," are the words of the prophet Micah. James F. Clarke believes firmly in the simple, pure humanity of Jesus, best shown in "Steps of Belief," under the "Historical Christ." I have "Steps of Belief," "Truths and Errors of Orthodoxy," also "Bible for Learners" and "Talks about Jesus" (M. J. Savage), to loan you. You have only to say which you wish first. . . . I am tired, and must rise early to be in the city in time for Sunday-school, so I will tear off the paper here, or I shall go on writing all night. Have more good sermons to send you. Wish you could go to Boston, join the Young Men's Christian Union (Unitarian), and be helped into what God means you and all to be, by putting our faculties to the highest use we are capable of. Hoping to hear further from you,

Truly your friend, SARAH ELLIS.

Sunday Evening. Our sermon to-day was on the "Effects of Modern Scientific Thought upon the Essentials of Religion." If it is published, will send you a copy of it. . . . I think the hymn will meet your views, therefore copy it. Do you know it?

The hymn referred to is the one, "God Ever Near," by T. H. Gill, beginning: —

> "What secret place, what distant star,
> O Lord of all, is thine abode?"

Miss Ellis copies it in full. In 1883 the young man wrote Miss Ellis: —

"A year ago I was in the dreariest stage of agnosticism. I was in despair at times, and sometimes my very soul seemed to be in agony. Through reading scientific literature I had been convinced that most of the religious teaching I had learned was false. The flippancy and shallowness of Ingersoll and his school disgusted me. I could not find rest in materialism; I considered it as far astray from the truth as Orthodoxy. I was nineteen years old, and found myself facing the most tremendous problems of existence. I tried to tell myself to wait for maturer years to solve them, and to a great extent that satisfied me. But I still yearned for *something*, — simply this: 'My soul cried out for the living God!' Alas! I could not find him. I looked around me for a little sympathy or a kind word even, but I looked in vain. Every Sunday I heard denunciations of such views as mine. I heard a great deal of 'blatant atheists,' 'infidel scientists,' etc., but no sympathy for a despairing agnostic, — only scorn and ridicule. It pained me intensely to be misunderstood by even those dearest to me on earth, but I determined to stand firm for what I took to be the truth. Oh for some men to preach a little charity for the views of others, and to consider a man as not being necessarily worse than a criminal because he cannot accept their own views! I owe you a large debt of gratitude for being the means of lifting me out of a state of misery and despair, in which I had no pleasure in life, into a state of cheerfulness, happiness, hope, and peace; not intellectual peace, —

for I do not expect that, — but real 'soul peace,' a calm trust and a real faith in a living God. I have been surprised to see how largely Unitarian theology is based on science. I owe it to science that my life is something more than daily drudgery. The foundation of my scepticism was laid when I learned the rudiments of natural philosophy in school. I was astonished at what I read of Nature's wonders. Since leaving school I have been an ardent reader of all kinds of scientific literature. By means of the Mechanics' Institute I have the use of all the magazines, reviews, etc., besides a splendid library. I have read a great deal that I did not understand, — books which are beyond my years; but I have a good idea of what is occupying the minds of the world's thinkers in this nineteenth century. One of the best lessons I have learned from the literature you have sent me is faith, — a very different kind of faith from the mere credulity I once knew by that name. At times I am dazed and confounded when I think of the great mysteries surrounding us, especially of the mysteries of death; but I feel that a good God is over all, and the main thing is to do right, and all will be well. I cannot express how much I owe you for the great good you have done me. You have my heartfelt thanks."

In another letter he wrote: —

"To say that I am delighted with 'The Religion of Evolution' is but a poor way of expressing myself. You could not have sent me a more timely book. I

would like to get all of Mr. Savage's books. You 'wish I could go to Boston,' etc. Ah! you do not know how I sometimes yearn for some such thing myself. I find my great pleasure and recreation in intellectual pursuits; and of course I have not nearly so great advantages in a small city as I would have in a large one. But for meditation and communion with the Infinite, communion with Nature and the incomprehensible God, I must have solitude. It was a favorite dream of my childhood that I would be a minister. But I have to work in another way. My father died when I was six years of age, and my mother therefore had a struggle to give us an education, — that inestimable blessing of a common-school education. I feel that the highest work for me is to support her to the best of my ability. . . . I value highly the sermons you send me. Most of our churches here offer one 'dry bones' instead of the living truth. Do you know of any low-priced publication which would give me a fair sketch of Theodore Parker's life and thought? I would like to know something of him. I am greatly pleased with the 'Register.' Mr. Savage's sermons are also a feast to me. The sermons of J. F. Clarke you sent me in June have a ring about them and a spirit in them that I find in few others."

Miss Ellis wrote him, Dec. 29, 1883 : —

Am glad to hear you have gained *something* in the past year. Do not be discouraged if you are not perfection at once. It takes *years* of struggle to become

so. Read the lessons on "Patience," in "Day unto Day," particularly "Jan. 9 — Parsons." You are quite young, remember, and there are many years for you to improve in, "and room for improvement," as people always say. . . . I will not allow *your* want of time to keep me from writing you. It is my own lack of time, and troublesome eyes. Have been very busy this winter. Have a gentleman in Alabama who is becoming much interested in Unitarian theology, and also one in Kentucky. It keeps my mind at work to send just the right thing to each one. My eyes are troubling me much this evening. Must close, to make some last preparations for Sunday, as I have to start early in the morning to be in time, and must also write a postal to a young nephew in Philadelphia, who is very fond of me and remembered me Christmas and always. Wishing you a bright, happy, and successful New Year, in which all the ladies join me, with kind regards to your mother,

Truly your friend, S. Ellis.

April 15, 1883.

I must answer your question, "Why no denunciation of sin (by Unitarians)?" In the New Hampshire "Statement of Belief" I first sent you, if you still have it, you will find: "(4) In Human Nature, as not ruined, but incomplete. Man is not fallen from a primitive state of holiness, but is imperfectly developed. Being imperfect, he is liable to sin. . . . *The essence of sin is the failure of the higher nature of man*

to rule his lower nature. Human nature is made sacred by the indwelling presence of God. Humanity is not tending downward, but is divinely guided from lower to higher forms of moral and spiritual life."

Starting from such a high ideal of man's nature, — that he is created in the "image of God," and as found in the first chapter of Genesis, I think, and in Psalms viii.: "Thou hast made him a little lower than the angels, and hast crowned him with honor and glory," — we feel him capable of so much, that our ministers are too busy talking concerning *being* and *doing* good to have any time left for denunciation of sin. Our great concern is to raise man in *every* way. Teach him to be cheerful, looking *forward* all the time, moving onward and upward, and to find no opportunity to spend in vain regrets, — only looking at his sins long enough to learn lessons from the past, that he may avoid them in the future. Our sins leave a deep stain that will affect us during our lifetime, but the only way to overcome them is to be so engaged in right doing that we rise above them. Now, do you not think this a far higher way of converting men than by dwelling on their weaknesses? Give the world something higher to do all the time, and they will naturally rise to that level. We start from a higher standpoint than the Orthodox, therefore our methods are very different. We denounce sin by avoiding it whenever we come in contact with it, or evil of any kind, and there is no more effectual way of overcoming it. Do you not see why it is we have ceased to speak

of it in sermons? We are too busy with the good, the true, the beautiful, to pay attention to the wickedness. Dr. Dewey wrote some stirring sermons, on "Human Nature." The topic of one is, "On the Wrong which Sin does to Human Nature;" — text from Prov. viii. 36: "He that sinneth against me, wrongeth his own soul." That was the former way of dealing with and denouncing sin; but the later way is, to take care always to place the better in people's way, and the sins will fall behind. Think you not so?

JANUARY 6, 1883.

. . . We sometimes strain at *words* when in reality we agree with others. If we would only remember to strive to discover wherein we agree, and not always be looking for divergence of opinion, there would be more of practical piety in the world. Let us open our eyes to the fact that *all* denominations endeavor to make men better, though they differ in methods; and see to it that we ourselves are true to the highest and best as far as we know it, and the kingdom of God will be hastened in everywhere. Do right for its own sake, and not from fear or hope of punishment or reward. Let me give you a hymn we sang after the sermon last Sunday. The subject was, "This life: why we are in it, and what we have a right to expect of it." The hymn is one of Rev. Samuel Longfellow's, "Life's Mission:" —

> "Go forth to life, O child of earth!
> Still mindful of thy heavenly birth."

[The whole hymn is copied] . . . . Methinks if one lives up to such a mission he will be none the less Christian than if he can accept the dogmas of churches.

He had consulted her about the propriety of his contributing to the support of the Methodist church when he no longer accepted its doctrines. She wrote in reply, Oct. 6, 1884 : —

. . . "There are two precepts which come to my mind when I am perplexed as to what to do, which I will mention : 'What doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?' (Micah vi. 8). The other: 'If ye have not the spirit of Christ, ye are none of his,' — from the epistles, but can't recall it just now. If you conclude to contribute to the Methodist church, you could tell Mr. B—— what your intention had been, and how I reasoned upon the subject. However, act just as you come to the conclusion. The thing is to do as you believe to be just. I should think the church I attended had the first claim upon me. 'Duty before pleasure' is true in any church. Am glad you think so well of Unitarianism, and hope you may be able to work heartily with us some day. Only be patient."

JUNE 7, 1884.

You speak of the "loneliness" of the position you are taking, and I felt glad to find you so firm in the step you are taking. . . . It will be a position full of

self-denial many times, but on the other hand will bring its own rich rewards, known only to the true minister of God. To encourage you in the many hours of discouragement, I advise Dr. Furness's sermon on the "Solitude of Christ," in "Register" of May 8, 1884, I think, which I believe has been sent you, but if not, will hunt it up and send it to you; and besides that, the words of Jesus: "He that hath put his hand to the plough and looketh back, is not worthy of me;" therefore have firmly fixed in your mind the glorious hymn by Rev. Samuel Johnson, "The Conflict of Life."

The whole five verses of this hymn are then copied, followed by the whole of Watts's

> "Awake, our souls; away, our fears, —
> Let every trembling thought be gone;"

and Doddridge's

> "Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve,
> And press with vigor on!"

Miss Ellis saying, at the end, "I have copied these, for they have more weight when written by those we know."

JULY 5, 1884.

. . . I will permit you to "unburden yourself" with as many pages as you see fit, at any time you feel disposed to do so, and promise not to be "bored." I, in my deafness, understand what it is to feel so utterly alone, though surrounded by dear, old, and tried

friends. This lack of one congenial person or thing no one can appreciate but those who have experienced. . . . Remember, *opinions* separate us, but kindly deeds and affection draw us close to one another; and so pursue your studies patiently, striving to make yourself the kind of man you think one ought to be, and in attending church do it in the spirit of Jesus, — with the feeling of worshipping God, and cast aside all other feeling, knowing that those around you are doing what they feel to be best. Leave it to the Good Father to judge them, and in time to help them to see differently. We are judged by living up to the highest and best we know, and if others have not been so far enlightened as we, or have not been moved by the Spirit to seek higher light and truth, we must work in patience and leave them in the hands of God. . . . Only be true to your own convictions, and you will lead them by example rather than precept, unconsciously to them. Work on patiently, and God's promises will not fail you. It is a slow process to overcome one's many failures; but we shall come out conquerors at the last if we only will, and are earnest in our endeavors. . . . After two weeks our churches will close for the summer, but *my* congregation will still be ministered to. I go to the church during vacation every two weeks to lend books to any who desire them.

November 16, 1884.

I feel for you greatly in your isolation; but comfort yourself in the thought that the generality of

Unitarian ministers are cut off from all companionship with ministers of other denominations where they are settled, and are seldom permitted to enter into charities, where they are, with other ministers. It has been the case ever since the days of Jesus, that those who really hold his views are separated from others in the community. But as you say, and many more say, "if we have God alone, that is enough." I cannot consider myself a "theist" entirely, but might call myself a "Christian theist." I have come to know God as manifested through Jesus, but have as much respect for those who do as Jesus did, and who have as firm a trust in the Father as Jesus had. Think that is what Jesus taught, and labored to have no man worship him. "There is none good but One," he said; "why callest thou me good?" Though I value Jesus, I do not worship him, or feel that he is my support in life. I only look to him in difficulties and trials to show me the way to the Father. I ask to worship and to live in his spirit and so gain strength from the Father wherewith to do. You and others look more to men of later date, who have learned from others nearer to them; but if we trace it all back to the beginning, we will find it is Jesus' spirit working through them. So one and all, whoever they are, wherever found, who have the spirit of Christ, are the sons of God, whether they call themselves merely theists, or Christian theists, it seems to me. George Eliot was truly religious, though perhaps not a Christian in the common acceptation.

DECEMBER 27, 1884.

I do not know as I "have ever realized the depths of absolute negations," but I have realized the depths of absolute solitude, and can sympathize with you in your loneliness, and "think it a good thing to keep the Eternal and Infinite always in view, and so love quiet, solitude, and meditation. They strengthen me to do my work in life." Do not despair, then, if you are despondent at times. Every one is, and it is good for us to some extent to be disgusted with ourselves; it makes us know ourselves. "The dark hours of life bring us nearer to our fellow-men, help us to know ourselves and bring us nearer to God." God has put these questionings into you for some wise purpose. Be true to your highest and best self, and work them out by degrees. But remember you are young yet, and there is time for you to solve all these mysteries in. Do not try to solve all the great questions of life at once. Be patient, and do not brood too much. Meditation and solitude are good, but try to mingle somewhat with those around you. See God in the world about you, as well as in the stars. I would like to dwell longer upon your letter, but perhaps I shall bring you out of doubt by giving you something to do. [She then proposes a bit of work for him to undertake] . . . Our doubts and mysteries are solved sometimes by setting to work on things we are pondering over.

He wrote Miss Ellis, Aug. 24, 1885: —

"A shadow has come across my way of late, — a great disappointment. I think I mentioned it to you before. A doctor, an acquaintance of mine, has often told me that I studied and read too much. . . . It is hard for me to realize this, but he insists on a year's rest from study. This will postpone my entrance to Meadville for two years, I fear. I confess to great disappointment over this. I will be past twenty-five when I get to Meadville; and yet there is another side. I have often questioned my fitness for this great work. I wish to be cautious. I do believe that I have a noble gospel to preach. 'To preach,' — but first to live it. And, in shame I confess it, I have not lived it. It will therefore be a good thing if in these two years I give myself to growth in manhood. But enough of this. These matters must be dealt with in the closet, — the soul's closet. . . . After my taste of Montreal fellowship I am sick with loneliness here. It is fearful, at times, this longing for one friend even, and finding none. But it must be borne without grumbling. And now I must stop. The doctor would object to even this light piece of writing. Thank you kindly for sending me the 'Register' and 'Unity.' It is very good of you to look after me so much. Be assured that your kindness is giving great encouragement to a lonely one who, amid much opposition and misunderstanding from his dearest ones, is making at least a *little* honest effort to be true to himself and God. I would that I were fully faithful; but it is not so. Still I think your seed will yet bear fruit, and spring up in

a life devoted to the uplifting of mankind. My deepest prayer is for this. I trust your health will improve. Still more do I trust that you may continue to grow nearer God, and help others to do so, as you have helped me."

Miss Ellis replied, Aug. 30, 1885: —

". . . I have neglected you of late, thinking you were soon to go to Meadville, and that you were busy. We are sorry to hear of your great disappointment. It is a disappointment to us as well, particularly to me. However, we need the reverses and crosses of life as much as the air we breathe, to strengthen our characters. You have pushed yourself so hard with business and studies the past two years, that you have not taken time to view the life around you in the right light. Let the next two years be given principally to building up your character individually and socially, and to improving your health, as one of the first requisites of a minister is a sound mind and a healthy body. Be social; take life cheerfully; make those about you better for your company; and mingle freely with your family and best friends, showing them you are practising Unitarianism. Yes; make these two coming years tell as a preparation for college in another way, and let them prove a blessing to you, though a disappointment at first. Did you read Rev. E. E. Hale's 'Methods,' in 'Register' a few weeks since? This week's 'Register' contains an excellent sermon by Rev. John Clifford on 'Spirit-

ual Building.' Have a home worship of your own sometimes. During the vacation, every Sunday I have had a regular worship. For instance, to-day I read for sermon, 'Spiritual Building;' opening hymn, 'Come, Thou Almighty, help us to praise;' 'Scriptures Old and New' (a compilation by Mr. Forbush and Mr. Hosmer, from all religions, and an excellent thing to have), Lesson 27, — 'The Kingdom within us;' prayer, followed by Scripture lesson, Galatians iii., from which is taken text; then Wesley's hymn, 'The whole armor of God;' sermon; closing hymn, Doddridge's 'Awake, my soul, stretch every nerve,' etc. Have been interested during the vacation in looking over Gannett's 'Childhood of Jesus' and Carpenter's 'Palestine when Jesus lived.' Also bought 'Selections from the Apocrypha,' compiled by Mrs. Tileston, who compiled 'Daily Strength.' Readings from the Apocrypha are so common in Unitarian pulpits now, that it is well to be familiar with the best portions. Am not able to do much reading now. Am physically too weak. Never was able to use my brain to its full extent, — feeble and nervous all my life, but active otherwise."

Miss Ellis's last letter to him was written but little more than a month before her death, when in the utmost weakness herself; but to this she makes no allusion. It was a letter of consolation in bereavement, from which this is an extract: —

November 18, 1885.

. . . The only way to reconcile ourselves to our sorrows is to think of those who are worse off than ourselves. It makes us less inclined to murmur in our own sadness. It is good for us to bear the cross. If things were always as we would have them, many virtues would never be developed. There are so many comforting pieces in "Sunshine in the Soul." Some I marked for a former correspondent. Mr. Thayer read for his Scripture lesson last Sunday, Job. iv. 5; and v. 6–11; 17 to end. I have no doubt your sister knows many comforting passages; but the real comfort is found in keeping ourselves busy for others, while at the same time we lean and trust in God to give us peace of soul. We find it in time as we go on patiently doing the duty just before us, and loving the blessings which remain to us.

One of Miss Ellis's last thoughts was for this correspondent. When hardly able to speak, she requested a special "Register" sent to him. It was sent, and a postal card informing him of her condition. He replied: —

December 25, 1885.

Your card came to me this morning. I am shocked at its sad message. I was not in the least prepared for it. It seems to hold out no hope. Though I have never seen Miss Ellis, she has been to me for over three years a close friend. And now I must lose her friendship, and her kind encouraging letters! But I

am not intending to complain of loss, but rather to be thankful for the help I have received from her. I shall now have another motive to work on, to be more faithful in life. That motive shall be the memory of Miss Ellis's self-sacrificing life. I have a large package of her letters which will be more valued now than ever before. I do trust her work will go on; it ought to certainly. If I can help I will gladly do so.

Later, he wrote in reply to a letter announcing her death: —

JANUARY 1, 1886.

I was very glad to hear a little of our dear friend who spends this happy New Year's Day freed from all ills of the body. I can hardly realize that she is gone. She never gave me a hint that she was seriously ill, but always spoke cheerfully. It is such a short time ago that I wrote to her as usual, not having the remotest thought that she would never answer my letter. Her last letters to me are dated Nov. 6 and 18, and, singularly enough, are almost entirely taken up with remarks upon death and affliction. Not a word of herself, however. . . .

Miss Ellis wrote me two letters full of kindness and sympathy, and sending cheering words to my sister; for she wrote, "Though I don't know her, I feel deeply for her." It really is hardly possible to estimate the influence, both direct and indirect, which Miss Ellis has had upon my life. It is a very long story, this of my inquiries in religious matters. I have

always looked forward to the day when I should see our friend and speak to her of it, and make some expression of my gratitude to her. But it is not to be, — not in this life, at least. Hereafter her letters shall be a source of constant encouragement to me. I have them all, and glad I am of it, for through them she will yet speak to me. I often wished to have a photograph of her, and I am very sorry now that I too long hesitated to take the first step in making a mutual exchange. Often when weary through the day's work I have been cheered by her kind letters. But this is only one limited instance of her influence. For years I went to my daily work sad and heavy of heart because life was aimless, almost dead. By the printed page Miss Ellis showed me God, — God living, working, right here now, daily surrounding me and all men. And lo! life has an aim, is full of beauty and goodness and joy. . . . All this I owe to her.

In response to a request for letters, he wrote:

February 14, 1886.

In your card you speak of a book. I hope the pamphlet will grow into a book. I was delighted to hear that it will contain a portrait, for that will be just what I wish for. The letters I sent, I had to just pick out hurriedly, as I had very little time. If I had had more time, I might have made a better selection. I will vouch for their quality, however. I have post cards innumerable from her. Then again, once, when

I was having a sore mental struggle over the philosophy of prayer, in answer to my inquiries Miss Ellis wrote out for me the greater part of Mr. Chadwick's sermon on "Prayer," in his "Faith of Reason." This I mention as one out of many instances of such work. She never tired of trying to aid me. I sent you the last letter I received from her, never having a thought, at the time I received it, of its being the *last* one. Perhaps Miss Ellis is aware of all this afterglow, as you so well call it. I hope so. I believe so. How it must gratify her to know what she accomplished!

In looking over these letters I am very forcibly reminded of the last few years. . . . As you may suppose, Miss Ellis is much in my thoughts. I looked forward to meeting her some day, and making grateful acknowledgment of her influence for good on me. I would not hide from you that I often regret that it is not to be so. But every other thought is swallowed up in gratitude for her life and for our meeting together.

The following is Miss Ellis's first letter from a farmer's wife a dozen miles out of Cincinnati, who has this winter become a member of the Women's Auxiliary Conference, and wishes, with her daughter, to join the church: —

"I have frequently seen the item in the Sunday's paper offering Unitarian reading to those who wish it, and have as often determined to avail myself of the opportunity, but have so far neglected it. I will say that I have been for a long time somewhat of a Unita-

rian, without being sufficiently informed in the belief openly to declare myself one. I would ask you to teach me from the beginning the doctrines, so that I can understand and feel a safety in embracing them. I have a daughter who will avail herself with me of your kind offer. You are to be our teacher in the matter of selecting the reading, and I will gladly pay postage on all books sent."

As such teacher Miss Ellis acted ever after. She wrote in reply, Jan. 1, 1884: —

Was very glad to receive your letter to-day, and hope I may prove a successful "teacher." Have always been a Unitarian, as my father was among the first subscribers to the church, when it was established in 1830. . . . Have sent you by this same mail three tracts pertaining to our doctrines. Shall be glad to give you and your daughter a weekly Sunday-school lesson for several weeks. Began with statements of doctrine and Channing's famous Discourse. On the list sent have numbered other tracts in the order in which I shall send them, — leading you from Channing to Brigham and J. F. Clarke, showing an advance in thought up to Mr. Wendte's tract, "What Do Unitarians Believe?" which represents Unitarianism as held by the *young* men of the present time; and after you read these tracts, if you wish more doctrine, will mention some books we can loan you by mail. With the tracts will also send the "Christian Register," where you will see our principles carried out. It is a very inter-

esting, able paper. Perhaps after you have examined a few copies you may like to become a subscriber to it. I usually spend Mondays mailing papers to our correspondents, though they do not all get off till about Wednesday. They will be in time for a Sunday lesson, however, and I hope you may find some neighbors to join you in your study. Hoping this is a beginning of another good work for us, and to hear from you further, Respectfully yours,

SARAH ELLIS.

JANUARY 26, 1884.

This leads me to your question, "What do you do with the Immaculate Conception? Why was that way employed to compel people to accept the divinity of Christ?" Ask as many questions as you please, and I will answer them in letter, or send some sermon or tract to throw light on the subject to you. Monday, will mail to you "The Incarnation," by Rev. J. W. Chadwick, wherein you will see that many of the doctrines of the early times were invented by the men of the day to suit some purpose of their own. Will shortly send you a lesson paper by Rev. William C. Gannett, of St. Paul, Minn., on "The Christmas Story and the Christmas Fact." These stories or "legends" concerning Jesus were written some time after his death. "Bible for Learners" says — [Here is copied a long extract.] I have said enough to let you know that we do not accept these "legends" as literal truth; and you will understand, from "The Incar-

nation," that Jesus was not miraculously born any more than we all are. Jesus never claimed it for himself, as you will find as you read what I send you from time to time. It was a doctrine created by the Church to suit later days. I was glad to have you speak freely of yourself, and hope that we may make religion, the Bible, and Jesus, natural, simple, true, and beautiful to you and your daughter, — something that you can take hold of and live out in your daily lives, and be thankful that you *live*. Hoping that you may have further questions to ask, and wish to borrow books on subjects of interest to you,

Very truly your friend, S. Ellis.

There is a book that will throw much light on your question concerning the early view of Christ, "Orthodoxy and Heresy," by Rev. E. H. Hall. We have it to loan.

March 13, 1884.

It is with pleasure I sit down to reply to your last letter, and it has only been from total inability that you have had to wait so long. I wanted to sit down immediately to send you a few sympathetic words, for your life must have been very similar to my own. The best comfort for us is, to say to ourselves, Are not many, *many* others carrying the same burdens, disappointments, and toils as we? How do they bear them, and where do they get their patience and strength from? Only from studying the words and lives of those who have had similar trials to bear; and no one bore the cross better than He to whom the whole world has

looked as a guide. Therefore though you fall and fail often, be not in despair. All you need is some one to speak with you who sympathizes with you; and though they may not lighten your burden or change your circumstances, they will lighten your heart and make the whole world seem different to you, and full of work to be done, that will take your thoughts out from beyond your own home, and yet at the same time only make that all the more precious to you and just the place you ought to be in. Am not fond of the country myself. Have always lived in the city, and prefer to be surrounded by people and life rather than trees and quiet of the country; still, I love to visit in the country for a short time. . . . You ask how you can best prepare yourself to become a member of our church. I sent you the church programme, and Mr. Thayer says there, "Those who present themselves in an earnest spirit,"—an earnest spirit to do all the good you can, in every way, at home and to the world. It is *character*, and *not* belief, which makes the true Christian. And if our conscience is right before God, let man say what he will; if we are only sure ourselves we are doing our best according to our circumstances and our health; if our motives are pure and our conscience clear, — we shall feel a pleasure in joining in a Communion service, though one can be a member of our church if not a communicant. There are several books I wish to recommend to you. The first is a great help to inward strength, and is a gem of a book, "Day unto Day," which consists of a passage

or two from the Scriptures, a selection from poetry, and one from writers, for every day in the year. . . . The whole book is full of selections which fit the needs of every day. I have two copies, and will loan you one copy with passages I have marked as read, and which has benefited several of my correspondents. . . . Another great help to a good life is Merriam's "Way of Life." "Theodore Parker's Prayers" I can loan you too. Since I wrote you, have had presented to our library Sunderland's "What is the Bible?" shorter than "Bible for Learners," and on the whole better to read first. I subscribed for the Sunday-school lessons on "The Life of Jesus," so any time you are welcome to it. You will understand from what I have written, that to strengthen the inner man is a good preparation for anything and anywhere; and you will find a great deal among our books, and in our papers, and in our religion, to help you and make life a blessing, though under unfavorable circumstances, and enable you to have the spirit and faith *of* Jesus, if not so much *in* Jesus, which the Orthodox make most emphatic.

The following letter was written June 27, 1885. The unusual allusions to her own health are evidently in sympathy with the correspondent, who had written of ill health and heavy burdens to bear.

"I have been most useless since the middle of February; but, weak as I am, I have insisted on staying

out of bed, waiting on myself, and keeping my room in order, even to sweeping it, and keeping up my missionary work slowly. I do dislike to be nursed and a care to people. Sometimes it seems impossible for me to get dressed for my breakfast, and it takes me about one hour and a quarter, I am so weak. Last Sunday I could not get to church; but I spent the day in resting, — spiritual rest. I had a service at home, — the responsive service, the three hymns, the Scripture lesson, and read one of J. F. Clarke's sermons, which I sent to another who needed consoling. There is a favorite hymn of mine, which I will write out for you. We often sing it for an opening hymn. [The hymn "Daily Consecration," by Caroline Mason, is here copied in full.] Excuse the mistakes, for I have written it from memory. Work on, dear friend, just where you are, and feel that there you are casting silent deeds of love which no one knows but the good Father above, but that they are none the less earnest work in his service. . . . Every other Saturday A. M. I go to the church to do up papers for the Workhouse. Was there *this* morning. Take heart, good friend, and feel that nothing you do is lost, and that sometime your labor will be appreciated. I must not write longer, for I want to attend church to-morrow. They miss me when I am not at my post."

Another letter of this summer reads: —

My dear Friend, — Your letter was duly received, and I wanted to answer it immediately, but have been too weak to write *comforting* letters.

Am so sorry to hear you are still sick, and wish I could help you. Am still more sorry to hear you are "dreading" the summer; but I do not wonder at it, for on a farm the labor required by the women in the house must be incessant. . . . I cannot take the burden off your shoulders; but perhaps a word of sympathy from another, and something from her experience, may enable you to face the difficulties. . . . My experience has been that when anticipating a hard time, if I only accept it, and make up my mind that it *has* to be my part, half the burden is taken off, if I determine to go through with it all, giving myself up to that work and thinking of nothing beyond in the mean time. Take all the rest I can get, instead of trying to do something else too. Rest will do you more good than company or books, when you are so used up with real hard work. Women all try to attend to too much outside of their households, for the sake of company and variety; do you not think so? Now, just take things as quietly as you can this summer, and feel that in your home duties you have more than you can do, and look forward to the time when summer will be over and you will have less care.

After her death, the lady wrote: —

"I sent my letter to her home by a messenger who reported that he understood at the door, as he handed it to the person who answered the bell, that Miss Ellis was dead. I hoped that he was mistaken, but your

letter confirmed it. I knew she was very feeble. She wrote me some two weeks before Christmas, saying she was very weak; but I did not think for one moment that she was in danger, or I would have hurried to see her. I shall miss her greatly, and her dear letters to me, which I prized so highly; and you, who saw more of her than I could possibly, will feel her loss greatly. I believe there are few persons capable of entering so entirely into sympathy with others who needed it as she was, and of giving such consolation; at least, it has not been my good fortune to meet many such. I will be glad to receive the memorial of which you speak. I shall be very glad if your minister would write me on the subject of joining the church, as I was depending on Miss Ellis to guide me in the matter, which she was ready to do one year or more ago."

In 1884 Miss Ellis received the following letter from a young man, Mr. A. J. Beach, who had been one of her discouragements, because, after some correspondence, she had ceased to hear from him. Mr. Beach was usher in the State Penitentiary at Joliet, Ill.

"More than a year ago I wrote to thank you for papers which you had kindly sent me. In answer, you sent me a very kind letter, and named several books which I might read with profit. I procured a number of Rev. James Freeman Clarke's works, which I read carefully, and from which I gathered much of

great value. I also subscribed to two of the papers you named, to which I have become so much attached that I could not possibly do without them. . . . Your letter led me to a course of reading and investigation that has proved a sun-burst to me. I have been in darkness. I am out of it now. I am connected with the State Prison (as usher), not the pleasantest position in the world; but I have tried to show many of the poor convicts the better way of life, and to cheer them by kind words and a showing of real interest in their unfortunate condition, and I believe I have succeeded in making lighter many a poor friendless fellow's load. . . ."

The following extracts are from others of his letters: —

"I have read the sermons, and have handed them to a very intelligent prisoner, who has become greatly interested in Unitarian teachings, and requested him to pass the documents to others, after reading them. He will do so, and will see that they are kept moving. I am glad you are taking so much interest in our prison. There is much need of genuine kindness here, and it cannot be better shown than in a true and apparent desire to raise the unfortunates to a higher plane of thought and action. These men and women are in a sense left to themselves. They are not permitted to talk to each other. They pass long hours in their cells either reading or thinking. Is it not the very time to get them started thinking in the right direction? You

say, We shall write to the Secretary of the Women's Auxiliary Conference in Boston, . . . and interest them in the Joliet prison. This is good news. The Post Office Mission is truly a grand mission, and is doing more good than you may think of."

The next letter says: —

"The papers and tracts you have been kind enough to send me have been given to prisoners, and they have been passed from hand to hand until literally worn out. There are a great many very intelligent men among the fifteen hundred and fifty convicts now in our prison, and they (or many of them, at least) are very glad to get such papers and tracts as you have sent me; and I am only too glad to place such reading matter in their hands. You asked if old 'Registers' and 'Unities' would do any good. They would be thankfully received by many of the unfortunate men, and would be carefully read by them. Reading is one of the very few privileges granted convicts. . . . I to-day received from Mrs. Thacher, of Boston, a bill of lading for two barrels of papers and magazines shipped for distribution among prisoners; also a kind and very interesting letter from Mrs. Thacher, — for all of which I am indebted to you. I am glad, indeed, Unitarian people understand that convicts want and appreciate something more in reading matter than chilling tracts. We are constantly receiving for distribution the strongest kind of Orthodoxy, but the prisoners do not seem to

take kindly to it. . . . An old colored man, who was sent here eleven years ago under life sentence, said to me yesterday, 'I tell yo', sah, it seems mighty ha'd to sarve in hell all yo' life in dis place, an' den have to take it for sartin' su'ah in de nex' worl'.' He seemed to think that a sentence to the penitentiary was merely carrying out a part of the divine plan; in other words, he was foreordained to eternal suffering, and has got eleven years on his way. . . . We found the books and papers to be all that could be desired, and have taken great pleasure in distributing them. . . . Could you have heard the genuine thankfulness expressed by the unfortunate prisoners as I passed along the galleries distributing the reading matter, you surely would have felt amply repaid for interesting yourself in them. . . . Many said, 'God bless the ladies who thought of us!' with an earnestness and sincerity which indicated clearly to me that they felt and appreciated the kindness and the motives of the donors. My experience among convicts has convinced me that kindness shown toward them is never wasted. There are in this prison several noted criminals, — men who have the reputation of being brutal desperadoes, — with whom I have frequently talked, and have invariably found to be easily touched by a kind word and act."

Last June Mr. Beach dropped dead in a Chicago depot while on his way home. It seems proper to copy here portions of a letter written to his family by the chaplain of the prison.

JUNE 30, 1885.

. . . As we roomed together, I was with him more than any one else; and when not otherwise engaged, we read and talked together. . . . We were very frank with each other, and last Sabbath eve we had a long talk on religion. The reaction from a Calvinistic faith had evidently left him somewhat adrift. We talked of the cramping of creeds on the one hand, and the tendency on the other hand of (so-called) Liberal views to produce loose morals, etc. He dwelt on the fact that the perceptions of the mind were so much in advance of the inclinations of the heart, that men knew better than they did; adding, "Oh, I have often come so near to the wonderful process by which bad men are made good!" I reminded him that Paul said, "It is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart," —dwelling at length on the whole argument in Romans x. 6 to 13 inclusive. I remarked that my habit of urging these views earnestly for forty-four years might have become obtrusive; but he answered: "No; if these things are worth anything, they are worth everything. If duty here affects destiny there, these are matters of primary and not secondary consideration." Little did I think then that in twelve brief hours he would know their reality better than I possibly could. In saying good-by [the chaplain adds], he said he would write soon, was glad he had ever known me, but feared he *would not see me again;* then walked off feebly but cheerfully with ——, who carried his satchel, and to whom he was much attached

— though a colored convict, yet much of a man. At 7.30 A. M. he went with Mr. L——, our purchasing agent, with whom he talked freely *en route* to Chicago, who carried his satchel, helped him up the stairs in the depot, and at whose feet he suddenly dropped dead. A physician was called at once, but paralysis of the heart had stopped the wheel of life. . . . The boys here loved him *much*. B——, a special friend, gave him a pretty onyx cross for his little niece. I think he put it in his pocket. Some Boston ladies sent him several boxes of pamphlets and books for the library, advising him to keep certain volumes himself, and I hoped he had written his name in them or set them aside; yet C—— (colored) and T. J. D——, who aided him in the library (and mourn him as a brother) think he read the volumes they recommended, but made no further claim on them. Some prison employees, like some physicians, find their sympathies decrease by constant use. *He* was not so; for there was not a drop of tyranny or despotism in his blood, and any one who used power simply to oppress another was beneath his contempt. He could consistently say to the Recording Angel, "Mark me as one who loves my fellowmen." Oh! had I known all he probably meant when he said so tenderly at parting, "I fear we will not meet again," I would have followed out the impulse of my heart, clasped him in my arms, and then have said (as I did), "Yes, we will meet in heaven!"

The following extracts are from Miss Ellis's letters to Beach: —

DECEMBER 23, 1884.

Your letter was received last Saturday afternoon, and was quite encouraging to us, for we may do some good work in the prison with one who feels interested with us. Your letter was particularly welcome, as the same morning came a letter from Mrs. J. I. W. Thacher, Secretary of the Women's Auxiliary Conference of Boston, who responded promptly and satisfactorily to my letter, though she was sick in bed. After the hurry of Christmas is over, they will send you two barrels of literature,—"Registers," "Harpers," "Centuries," "Atlantics," and some few other materials. I feel as if this will be "good news" to you. Yes; it is a good time to turn the minds of the men, women, and boys in the right direction. "A little kindness" and good advice may help some of the poor creatures to a better life. Think Orthodoxy takes a wrong starting-point in teaching one that he is "totally depraved," and that he must wait for a sudden conversion in order to become good. I feel as if Unitarianism is the better way, upholding that we are "not totally depraved, but incompletely developed," and that our salvation depends greatly upon individual responsibility. That we have it within ourselves to become what God intended we should be, and what was possible with Jesus is with us, — that we may become "sons of God" as he was. We are not to "shift the responsibility off on to some one else," as M. J. Savage says. These poor creatures must be taught that the sin is greatly on their own shoulders, and

they are capable of overcoming if they only will. Mr. Savage's closing sentence is fine, — "Not to do wrong, one must develop in himself the ability of magnificent self-control!" That is the starting-point of many of life's failures, — lack of self-control. Teach these poor creatures that lesson, and some trade by which they can support themselves when they leave the prison. You wrote us word you subscribed to two of our papers. I take it for granted they are the "Register" and "Unity." If so, will call your attention to a review of a book on "Prison Reform," in "Unity," Dec. 16, 1884. I sent you yesterday a tract, "Unitarian Belief in Bible Language," marking several passages which I thought might rouse some of the poor men and women and *boys* (it is the *young* we must work on, and see to it that we are making better men and women for the future) to a truer view of what sin is; also, "Wrestling and Blessing," by Rev. William C. Gannett. His first section, on "Inherited Burden," is capital, showing that in spite of it we may come off "conquerors." The whole of the tract is good. . . . Hoping we may continue to aid you in the prison work, and with the good wishes of the season from the Women's Auxiliary Conference to you and all prison-workers and inmates,

Cordially yours, S. Ellis.

February 5, 1885.

If we can only make men feel their bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit, which they have of God, and that they are not their own, and that in sinning

they disgrace this holy temple, it seems to me that there would be less crime in the world. It is the divine in their own souls they defile. There has been a tract of Unitarian hymns published. I will send you a copy next week, hoping that some of our beautiful hymns may cheer the poor benighted prisoners. . . . I have had people say to me, "The Unitarian faith does very well to live by daily; but when you are in trouble, or your friends die, if you do not believe in the Trinity, what have you to comfort you?" My reply is, "We have God, from whom Jesus received *his* strength. We have the faith *of* Jesus, and not so much faith *in* Jesus. We can trust *God* to help us in our hour of need; and if we have sinned we know *He* is ready and willing to pardon us. We know that to live truly in this life will secure us happiness in the world to come; and that while we are here there is time to repent and do good, and we would not wish to feel that it was necessary for a perfect being to die to spare us from our sins. We had rather suffer on, if we have done the wrong, than see some one else suffer for us."

On receiving the news of Mr. Beach's sudden death in July, 1885, Miss Ellis wrote to his sister:

". . . I was much shocked and very sorry to hear the news your letter, which was received this morning, contained, but was much obliged to you for speaking so plainly of your dear brother, for I was much interested in him. Not only I, but *all* of our little

Women's Auxiliary Conference, and also the ladies of the Auxiliary Conference in Boston. He was a noble fellow, and doing much good there in the Joliet prison. I hope to transfer my esteem and respect for him to his family in remembrance of him. How little it ever occurred to me, when I wrote the letter to him on the 20th, that the dear fellow was safe in his heavenly home. I am sure he deserved a high place with the dear ones above, in whatever faith he died. He used to write us such good, interesting letters, both here and to Boston. We were always glad to get them. . . . I never have known to what church he and his family belong, but have imagined the Presbyterian. . . . What church do you attend, and how old was Andrew? I am old enough to be his mother, I suspect, and looked upon him and some few other of my correspondents as 'my boys,' as one of my converts styles himself. My hope was that Andrew would study for the ministry some day. . . . I know what sorrow is, but must say yours is one of the most trying ordeals to pass through, — an only son, and such a noble one, to die among strangers. My heart aches sorely for you, and I do not wonder it seems like a 'dream' to you. We do not know and cannot tell why our dear ones are taken. We can only trust in God's love to lighten the burden for us after a time, and accept our present trial. The spirit of the dear ones will help us to be kinder and more loving to those who are left with us; and gradually a change comes over us, and as days roll on we

find our lives are very different from what they were before, — purer and holier, and we have been drawn nearer heaven and been with our dear one all the time. I will copy a beautiful poem of Whittier's, 'The Angel of Patience,' at the close of this letter. 'Our earthly loss is our heavenly gain.' . . . Bear as bravely as you can, and the good Father will send peace to your souls as the years roll on. 'We must through much tribulation enter the kingdom of heaven.' We shall be glad to send papers to *you* now. I think in the 'Register' you will find many things to comfort you often; and from time to time I will select something especial for you. Let me know, please, by postal, if you prefer not to have them. Shall be very glad to hear from you any time."

This letter led to a correspondence continued until Miss Ellis's death, and to the sending of much literature to the family. Further extracts from this correspondence follow: —

AUGUST 16, 1885.

. . . I do not wonder you miss the dear brother, and feel grieved that you may not see him again. I do not believe the good Father in heaven is angry if we murmur some. He cannot be so harsh as to have us cultivate family affections and friendships on earth and not have any loving feelings left. No! It is right to mourn, but yet "not without hope." One of the most beautiful sermons I ever heard, and the most comforting, was one from our pastor, Rev. C. W. Wendte, on "The Dark Hours of Life, and what they bring us."

Here she copies the closing passages of the sermon, and also four pages of poems, — "The Heart Prayer," by J. N. Spriggs; "I am so Weak," Jennie E. McCaine, both from "Unity Songs Resung;" "My Dead," by Rev. F. L. Hosmer; and selections from "Scriptures Old and New." So little did she spare the feeble remains of her strength in these last months. Sept. 27, 1885, she wrote: —

". . . Not that I have so much to do, but this changeable weather has unfitted me for work, and I have a good deal of extra work lately, that has exercised my brain considerably and required *long* letters. I was put on a committee of three at the St. Louis Conference last May, for drawing up systematic Post Office Mission methods. Rev. Arthur Judy, of Davenport, Iowa, is the chairman. He has planned a circular letter and a book of records. It has taken much of my time to read the long letters and give my opinion of them. . . . We have to work very differently in this region. . . . However, in time we shall have more than one enlightened family in a place. The way to overcome is to lend our papers, tracts, books, etc., that the people may see we are Christians after all. We do not want to convert them so much, but to make more sincere Christians of them, and happier people in this world; and by degrees they throw aside their old dogmas without knowing it. We do have so many comforting books; so many good Sunday-school

lessons adapted to grown people even; devotional books, too, with selections which fit each day; and also so many books containing a true account of Unitarianism and of the Bible, that I feel every one ought to read them, and own many; but of course they cannot. . . . I want to lend you a little daily book I have, — 'Day unto Day.' It is in rather a dilapidated state, because I have sent it by mail to a number of persons. I have two copies, but both birthday presents, and I do not like to part with either. The pencil-marks in it are mine, as they have impressed me day by day. You may retain it three or four months if you wish."

The sister wrote in reply: —

October 27, 1885.

I wish to thank you especially for the loan of your book, "Day unto Day." It was very kind in you, and I have found it to be a perfect mine of beautiful gems of truth and wisdom, and "day unto day" it can furnish comforting thought for all occasions.

I was very much interested in your statement of your work as a member of the committee you mentioned. Certainly, such an amount of such elevating literature distributed so extensively must result in much good. The literature that I receive from you we endeavor to make the very best use of, — by first "thoroly" reading in our own family, and then lending to those among our neighbors and friends who will be most likely to give their attention to it. On

one or two occasions we have invited in, on Sunday afternoons, some of our neighbors, and made them occasions for reading to them an especially good sermon or article, hoping to awaken sufficient interest to perhaps have frequent readings and talks. In our village there are two churches only, — the Disciples and Presbyterian.

The date of Miss Ellis's last letter to this correspondent shows it to have been written less than a month before her death: —

November 30, 1885.

Your letter was very welcome, and I intended replying sooner; but for the last three weeks have been very miserable, though up, out, and at work all the time, accomplishing little, however. We were so glad to hear you were occasionally having Sunday readings and doing the good you can. To-day I have mailed to you "Songs of Faith, Hope, and Charity," and the last Church Door Pulpit "Channing," selected by Mr. Gannett, whose father, Ezra S. Gannett, was Dr. Channing's colleague for many years. It is an admirable compilation, and I wish it were in small book form, for it would make a very beautiful little Christmas gift. Even in this form I shall use it for such a purpose. There are three books I would call your and your friends' attention to as little gifts of value at this season; namely, "Daily Strength for Daily Needs;" "The Thought of God in Hymns and Poems," by Rev. F. L. Hosmer and Rev. William

C. Gannett, just published; then there is a pleasant story-book for boys or girls published last year, "The Browns." . . . All this may be quite contrary to your feelings this year, and I presume you cannot enter into Thanksgiving and Christmas with the real spirit of former days. But not as you see the "golden lining" to all things can you give way to gloom. There is always *something* to be grateful for. How much worse *might* have happened to us. Then, too, we can feel thankful that we had our treasures so long, and that they were such a pleasure to us. Thanksgiving naturally makes us ask, "What have I to be thankful for?" and makes us somewhat sad; but at Christmas we lay aside all thought of self, and think of Him who was all unselfishness; and in this thought we try to forget our sorrows in order to send gladness thrilling through some other human soul, and thus forget our loss for that day at least, though tears may come involuntarily. Hope the Thanksgiving was as pleasant as it could be; that there was a reunion of those of you who are still living, and that the spirit of the dear one only drew you all together in stronger bonds of love. We — father, mother, and myself — were invited to dine with my brother ——, there to meet my dear sister's husband and five motherless children. It is the one pleasure to us to pass these anniversaries together, and to feel all our dear ones are with us in spirit, bidding us to be of "good cheer," for they are not dead, but with their love for us would guide us on to better things than

they ever knew or could accomplish. All is well with them now, and they look down smilingly upon our feeblest efforts to do the right and be cheery.

The sister wrote, Feb. 7, 1886: —

". . . We were very much shocked when we heard of the death of Miss Ellis. We had known that she was an invalid, yet, judging from her letters, we had no idea of the great weakness she must have endured physically in writing to her correspondents up to so recent a date. Her letters to us in our great bereavement were so full of tender sympathy with us, and were so comforting, we feel that we have sustained a great loss, even though we had never seen her. . . . It will be a pleasure to us to forward to you any letters of Miss Ellis either to my brother or myself that will aid you in the publication of a book . . . that will extend and perpetuate the influence of so useful and good a life."

Mrs. J. I. W. Thacher wrote: —

FEBRUARY 17, 1886.

You will be glad to know that we have had very grateful letters from the several stations in Kentucky to which we have sent barrels of magazines and papers. To Eddyville and Greenwood we have sent twice; and Dr. R—— (at the latter place) still says, "Send more whenever it is convenient;" so that we feel that the very miscellaneous collections have been really appreciated and enjoyed. In each barrel we sent large numbers of "Registers" and some good

tracts, and then filled in with miscellaneous magazines, — chiefly the illustrated ones. This is hardly Post Office Mission work, but I don't doubt it accomplishes much good, and I am always grateful to you and Miss Ellis for suggesting it to us. . . . Do you continue to be in communication with the Joliet Penitentiary, and is any one keeping on with Mr. Beach's work for the prisoners? It is a constant help and inspiration, — the thought of Miss Ellis's devotion to her work and her faithfulness to the end!

A young Englishman in Frankfort, Ky., wrote Mrs. Hunert, in answer to her card of inquiry:

"I do take the 'Register,' 'Unity,' and 'Unitarian;' I am almost entirely dependent upon what I read here, as I can hear no Liberal preaching, and meet with very few who have sympathy with Liberal religious views. I did get the memorial of Miss Ellis, and will prize it much, as I was better acquainted with her than any one connected with the church at Cincinnati, and looked upon her as one of my best friends, and a very noble lady. The day on which I received your postal, I met the chaplain of the penitentiary here, and he told me how much the Unitarian literature that was sent from the East was liked by him; that it was all distributed, and enjoyed very much by the inmates of the prison. If I had another copy or two of Miss Ellis's memorial, I would give one to the chaplain, and another gentleman, — about the only Unitarian I know here."

The following correspondence is with a workingman in Northern Ohio, — a young Englishman, whose letters tell his story. He once rose at four o'clock to write Miss Ellis before going to his daily work. One of his first letters to her said: —

March 16, 1885.

Now, that you may know in what walk of life I move, I must tell you that I am a laborer. When working by the month, my wages never exceeded twelve dollars a month. From such small wages I have built up a small library of 155 volumes; have also 156 pamphlets. I take unceasing delight in reading, and now that I have others dependent on me, am not able to procure all the books I need. By some I have been encouraged to prepare for the ministry. Such also is my aspiration. It may be years before I shall become a minister, because my preparation is not to be accomplished very quickly. Oh, how I wish that some one from their abundance would forward me some of the books and pamphlets they have cast aside, having no further use for! They would be of great use to me. What are the qualifications necessary for the Unitarian ministry? Will you please tell me? If possible for you to do so, please send me a few more sermons by Rev. G. A. Thayer, and I shall be greatly obliged.

Miss Ellis forwarded this letter to Miss M. O. Rogers, Secretary of the King's Chapel branch of

the Women's Auxiliary Conference, Boston, Mass., who had written, offering aid in her work. As a result, the King's Chapel Women's Auxiliary Conference sent this young man many Unitarian books of value, and the "Unitarian Review" regularly, for which his gratitude was great. He loans and distributes all matter sent him, and has procured many tracts from the American Unitarian Association for distribution. A portion of Miss Ellis's reply to the letter given above is as follows: —

March 18, 1885.

Your letter was read with much interest, and we are glad to know our "little society has done good work." . . . Don't be discouraged if you cannot convert the world at once, but wait quietly till your time comes to do more. You are young yet. Think I can spare a few more of Mr. Thayer's sermons. He has only had four sermons on "Reasonable Religion" published. . . . Will send you the Meadville catalogue next week, and you can see for yourself, and afterwards write to President A. A. Livermore, telling him I sent you the catalogue. He can give you all further information. He was the pastor in Cincinnati from the time I was fourteen to twenty-one, and knows us well. . . . Hope to hear further from you occasionally. Work on quietly, knowing the discipline will the better fit you for ministerial labors. We can't jump into the highest calling on earth in a moment, and now-a-

days a man must be something of more than ordinary ability to enter a Unitarian pulpit. It is not an easy place to fill.

He wrote to her, June 14, 1885 : —

"Believe me, I am sorry to hear that you were 'too sick to more than keep up' with your work. I know you must be busy at all times, from the report of your work in the Conference 'Unity' you sent me. That number of 'Unity' is very valuable to me, and will be kept for future reference. The four sermons on 'Reasonable Religion,' by Rev. George A. Thayer, have also been kept. I hope soon to see them in a neat binding. They are worthy of the expense. Of the books received from Boston, four have been read by me. Two of them were mostly read as I walked to my work mornings. In the same manner 'Meditations on the Essence of Christianity' was read. This book is very beautiful, its author, Robert Laird Collier. 'Channing's Works' and 'Genuineness of the Gospels' cannot be carried about as readily, so they are to be read and studied on lost days, when I cannot work. The 'Reviews' received are very valuable; I would not part with them for anything. The 'Register' is received regularly from Philadelphia. The last one is very interesting, containing as it does an account of the Festival. It must have been good to be there. To you, and all who have aided you in your generosity to me, I return my heartfelt thanks."

After Miss Ellis's death, he wrote, Feb. 13, 1886 : —

". . . With this I send you the whole of her correspondence to me, hoping that you may find something that will be of use to you. I cheerfully send you the letter and postals, knowing that my treasures will be in safe keeping. Since Miss Ellis's death they are doubly precious to me ; I prize them very highly, because she who wrote them proved herself to be a very dear friend to me, — a laborer longing for more light. Whilst I live I shall never forget how much I owe to her who labored so much in my behalf. It was the one wish of my heart to have met Miss Ellis, and to have thanked her for all that she had done for me; but it was to be otherwise. When I meet her in the country of 'many mansions,' I shall have the opportunity to do so. I believe I shall meet and know her there. Your offer of help is very kind; my greatest drawback is lack of books by Unitarian writers. I buy when I can, but being out of work — that is, steady work — since last September makes it very hard work to get a book very often. If you can help me in this way I shall be very thankful, and if you cannot, I shall be just the same, because I feel that you would if you could. I have much opposition to overcome, standing alone in my belief in the truth of Unitarianism. I have great need of more books. My preparation for the ministry must necessarily be slow, because I can never attend Meadville Theological College. But I am reminded that your time is

precious, and so I will close. Mrs. ——, will you at the next meeting of the Women's Auxiliary Conference thank all the dear friends who have done so much for me? If I ever amount to much in life I shall owe it all to the Cincinnati branch of the Women's Auxiliary Conference. Hoping that you will not forget me when sending out literature, I remain, etc."

In another letter he wrote: —

"My object in fitting myself for the ministry is to be able to carry the message of Unitarianism to my brother-laborers, because I believe it will make better men — and women too — of them. . . . I began to work when I was but a little more than eleven years old, and since that time I have been my own teacher."

A lady in Ohio sends her "Register" regularly (the arrangement being made through Miss Ellis) to the correspondent who wrote her this letter of thanks: —

"I have long postponed the note of thanks I have meant to send you. But when I tell you that I am a dressmaker, you will pardon me, I am sure. This is my harvest season, and I am extremely busy. Being one of the class of work-women who put *themselves* into what they do, I am exhausted at night, and forced to make Sunday a day of rest indeed.

"The papers do come regularly, to my great joy. I assure you that the pleasure and spiritual strength

I get from them, if you could realize it, would compensate you for the trouble an hundred-fold. My business, showing me so plainly the small foibles and weaknesses of human nature, and necessarily binding one's thoughts in large measure to 'band, gusset, and seam, seam, gusset, and band,' or their equivalents of flounces and gores, tends to a wearisome narrowing of the mind; a half-hour spent after work is done, with the 'Register,' opens a window, as it were, into heaven.

"I live alone. At times my isolation is hard to bear; but having seen better days, as the saying goes, to me my deprivations are but part of the discipline that God saw was needful for me. I am shut off, by reason of serving the public, from the society of my equals in education and breeding, and for that of my equals in station I have no taste. *Pardonnez-moi* these personal details; I give them that you may know how much good you are doing. Long may you be spared the power and the will to do such kindness to those who need. We may never meet on earth, but I trust we shall in heaven."

To Miss Ellis, Aug. 20, 1885, she wrote: —

"I receive the papers, and not only read and enjoy them, but give and send them to others. I am surprised to find 'unconscious' Unitarians wherever I go. I hope you may be well by this time. Do not tire yourself to write. Others need you more than I."

After Miss Ellis's death, she wrote acknowledging the memorial: —

"Many thanks. I was so glad to receive it, and prize it as one of my treasures; also for the welcome tracts and papers. They are like the shadow of a great rock in a weary land to me, and are given away to others."

A woman in a small Indiana village wrote Miss Ellis: —

"I understand you have Liberal literature that you send gratis to hungry people who are not able to gratify their appetite in that direction. It would be greatly appreciated by me, and after reading I would put it where I thought it would do the most good."

Later, she wrote: —

"I have received a paper and often something else every other week. These I have accepted as a kind of trust; and when there has been a favorable opportunity, given them away to friends and acquaintances. I do not press them on any one, nor talk about it much. I have not the courage of a reformer. When I speak to friends (that are kind every other way) of a broader religious belief, they meet me with coldness and distrust. It chills me, and I am silent. Yet I believe, with Helen Williams, if any one is brought to face a great truth, if they accept it, yet do not speak or act upon it, there is retribution, barrenness, for them, — a plunging in the whale's belly, as Jonah was, — a figure so many have laughed at, yet signifi-

cant for all that. I wonder now at my struggles in former years; am happier since the tangled skein is partially straightened. Still I am not fully in accord with the Unitarians. Miss —— [another correspondent in the same village] spoke to me some time ago of your desiring us to form a reading circle. I do not know what she said to you. I will give you the situation. I live in a small village of about one hundred inhabitants, and Miss —— lives about two miles away. I cannot call to mind a woman that would take any interest. They would go to sleep over their knitting, or want to use the time for social chat, as they do not meet day after day at the village store, as the men do (I speak of winter). True, there are a few that would enjoy the reading, yet are so severely Orthodox they could not comprehend a new truth outside of *their* church. That is the dark side. Now I have often thought if we had a place of meeting, where we could seat a small audience (which we have not), and a good reader (ditto), we could call them together Sunday afternoons and read some of the beautiful sermons you have sent.

"Your work is grand, — the elevation of the human race. The ones that *will* read, will become better, kindlier, more patient with ignorance; and while they yearn to give every soul a chance, will naturally throw out a better influence and teach a broader religion. As to your paper, not now. It is midwinter; husband, carpenter, out of employment. Intend to take one of your publications after a while."

About two weeks after Miss Ellis's death she addressed this letter to her: —

My dear Friend, — I received a "Register" yesterday, directed in a different hand. Are you sick? I hope not. I should grieve indeed if I knew that physical pain had stopped your work. These lines come to my mind: —

"Only a woman, and I could not find
The quiet household life that women know;
So too, my part where there were sheaves to bind,
Not much, perhaps, but more than I could do.
My tired feet failed me in the harvest lands,
My ripened grain but half-way reaped across;
And, where it dropped from over-wearied hands,
My best sheaf lies half bound for winds to toss."

Instead, may you continue your work till eventide.

Who can tell, when a mind gives up its beliefs, where it will stop? I seem to believe nothing, unless it is in the Supreme Good, whatever that is, — and my religion, to live the best life I know. The Orthodox preachers say if one strays from the "path," or "backslides," they are always uneasy and unhappy. How different my experience is! How glad I am to have escaped the little enclosure of dogma, and to stand "far indeed from being wise, but free to learn"!

Hoping this will find you in good health and spirits, I remain Your friend A —— C ——.

After hearing of Miss Ellis's death, she wrote:

"Received your postal. Have also received Unitarian papers, and Miss Ellis's memorial, which last I will store among my treasured mementos. How beautiful her life was! Though never having seen her, she will be treasured in my memory as a dear friend. She has sent me almost all the pamphlets, I suppose, that have been written for the purpose of distributing. Having a large family, they have been read and reread, and handed to neighbors and friends. One has no idea how many they will reach, or how much they influence; and yet there is so much prejudice against Unitarians among Orthodox Christians, some would take it as an insult to offer them one of the pamphlets. In our little village the 'United Brethren' have been holding meetings day and night for three weeks, and oh! how they do preach hell, and pray publicly for 'that lady that is leading her daughters down to hell,' simply because she does not believe as they do. I have more tolerance for them than they have for me. I think there are some people they will reach and do good, as I presume the Rev. Sam Jones is doing in Cincinnati."

The following letter to Miss Ellis from a poor old woman to whom she wrote, sent papers and other aid, for several years, is given *verbatim*, to illustrate the range of her sympathies. This letter was also written after Miss Ellis's death: —

"I wish I could come and see you, but I cannot afford to go up and down on the Trains. I have to send

by someone. now Miss Ellis you have been a sending me good Papers to read and now you must not think I mean to beg but you sent me a New years Card it was a Rose now I would not take anything for it I am as Foolish as Littel Children is about Pictures the Rose I have is in my Album and if you got any one by you to part With Will you send it to me for this New year I feel more than thankful for the Papers you have sent me. . . . Well I will close Write to me soon I am alone day and night So goodbye from a Dear Friend to one I Love."

A young man in a State Normal School in Indiana long corresponded with Miss Ellis. He has been an enthusiastic distributor of our literature, and instrumental in procuring Unitarian preaching in his city. Extracts from his letters are here given.

"The papers received are read by myself and others. There are few here who know anything of what Unitarians believe."

A second letter says: —

"The matter sent to me is read by several persons. I think of one young man now who asked me to send you his name. He said he would like to read literature made by persons who are independent of creeds. I gave him Wendte's 'Statement' and Chadwick's 'Art of Life.'

"I am grateful to you for your kindness, and shall

be glad to receive what you may send. I read the sermons by Savage with interest. They were the only ones of his I ever saw. I have given and shall continue to give the matter sent me wider circulation. [Mentioning a rebuff recently received, he continues:] This little experience, while not pleasant, is valuable to me. I see that the spirit of the Middle Ages is not entirely dead yet, and that one better not be too hasty. My convictions are just as strong as before."

Another letter says: —

"I know something of what it costs to break away from old associations. I was brought up in the Baptist Church. All my family were of that faith. . . . My relatives all look upon me as one lost to all true belief, because I cannot see my way clear to go with them in the traditions of the fathers. Still, I feel that to be true to the light I have is better than to have the sanction of those who are simply following what their creed teaches, asking no questions. I do not care to argue with them, and so follow that life that gives me the greatest comfort and satisfaction."

Feb. 11, 1886, he wrote Mrs. Hunert: —

"Miss Ellis was a very dear friend (although I never saw her), and it was a great shock to learn of her decease. The first intimation I had of her death was the article in the 'Register' headed 'A Candle of the Lord.' Whatever literature you may send me shall be given circulation after I have read it. I now supply some half-dozen persons by mail with the tracts

sent me. As I know the personal peculiarities of all these parties, I can adapt the matter to each. You will see, therefore, that I am a sort of branch 'mission.' In addition to this, I occasionally write a short article to a local paper in Wayne County upon subjects of interest."

He encloses one of these articles, — subject, "Future or Everlasting Punishment: Which?"

". . . Mrs. Smith wrote to me in regard to Miss Ellis's letters. I am very sorry not to have any of them. During the last three years I have moved so frequently, being sometimes in this State and sometimes in W. Virginia, that they were lost, and I am unable to find them. Some of them I carried for a long time in my pocket until they became so worn as to be scarcely recognizable. The form of them has vanished, but the kindness and sympathy they breathed is with me still. The spirit of that sainted woman cannot wax old. I humbly trust that I may be imbued with something of the calm and trust and purity which her letters always suggested. There was, too, an enthusiasm which was untiring, and withal a modesty that never was absent from her utterances. There was ever the absence of anything like dictation in her advice. It was the gentle monition of a friend, never the pompous dictation of conscious superiority. Rev. J. T. Sunderland, of Chicago, is to preach in our city March 21. I have never heard him, and am looking to his coming with expectation."

A young woman who is working out a Homestead and Timber Claim in Nebraska, and has been for several years supplied with much reading matter by Miss Ellis, which she has circulated so zealously as to have become one of the "branch missions," writes: —

"When I was about seventeen years old I joined the Baptist Church in Newport, Ky. (where at the time I was residing, and teaching in the public school in that city); and I was sincere in what I did, only I had so many doubts about many things that they taught, and hesitated from the beginning of the revival until the close before I could decide. Then my decision was made on this, that there were older persons belonging to the church that said they believed the teachings and doctrine, and I thought when I grew older and had more experience that I would understand, and I had a delicate fear to converse with the older members about my doubts for fear of their opinions of me; so I quietly stayed with them for a number of years, when an old friend, a good woman, now gone from among us, induced me to attend your church, Mr. Wendte then being the pastor. The subject he was to speak about was 'the Christ we know.' I remember my thoughts then were about these, — 'Christ they know? I don't believe they know any,' and thought I should like to hear what he would say, any way. I well remember that sermon; not one sentence he uttered jarred me in the least; and, strange to

say, they were my own thoughts on the subject; but I dared not, even if I could, have expressed myself. I thought over that sermon the whole week every spare moment I had, and even took some that did not justly belong to me. I shall never forget that week. The next Sunday his text was, 'the God we love.' For all I enjoyed the previous sermon, I still thought, 'They love God? Impossible!' and as my friends invited me to go over with them again, I accepted the invitation. I never had God represented to me before as now, — more like a kind father than an austere judge; yes, kind, compassionate, and loving us all alike, condemning only our evil actions. This suited me exactly; so another week was spent in thought. I would think, 'How can I conscientiously be a Baptist and believe this way?' Yet how I disliked leaving the church where many things were endeared to me. It seemed as if I was in a sea of trouble and doubt, not knowing whether to go on or halt and turn back. The next Sunday the subject was, 'the Bible we revere.' I was more than anxious to hear this one, for it seemed to me that on this I would have to decide. I went, and decided. I broke off gradually from my old associations, and attended the services in the Unitarian church from that time until I came West. I never joined the church, but it suited my views best of all churches, and to-day I cannot go in any of the Orthodox churches and feel at home. Now as regards this mission work that you wish me to engage in, I could devote half an hour each day,

and am willing to do all I can for the advancement of the cause. My health became very poor, and I went West thinking it would be beneficial. I must say I succeeded, for I am not compelled to stay now for my health, but business keeps me here. . . . My homestead is three miles from the town, and I go out quite often and stay over Sunday. My house is a very small dug-out. I raised about ten bushels of potatoes, some beans, and a few squashes; have done work I never thought of doing, — that is, planting vegetables, made my own bedstead, put a floor in the house, and lined it with sacking. Some of my lady friends assisted me when they came to see me, and gave me ideas about my new kind of work. Now last, but not least, in regard to Miss Ellis. I wrote to her directly after coming West, and told her I felt isolated from church attendance, but was pleased to find so many people with whom I could converse on Liberal thought. Since that time she had kindly furnished me with reading matter which I have again sent on its errand of peace and joy. I looked over a bundle of letters and can only find this postal card from her. . . . This card I send you is one she sent me in reference to Mr. Copeland. I wrote her for his address, which she gave me, and I requested him to come to our town and speak to the people here. He kindly consented to come, and spoke on 'Into the Light.' The majority of the people that heard him were well pleased, and he promised me that whenever he passed our town on his way to or from Denver he would stop over and

speak. Would like to have the card returned, as I want it for a remembrance."

In her first letter written after Miss Ellis's death she said: —

"Imagine how I felt when I came to your letter, and read the sad news of Miss Ellis's death. I feared the worst when I did not hear from her, for a friend had written me of her decline; but Miss Ellis herself never referred to her illness but once to me. She certainly must have been a patient and uncomplaining invalid, and I, with many others no doubt, feel as if I had lost a dear friend, and would be pleased to receive one of the memorials as a keepsake. . . . I can assure you that I do all I can towards building up a religion that all could conscientiously embrace. . . . All the reading matter sent to me I distribute to the best of my ability, and hope that as it goes on its mission good seed will be sown. There are numbers of Liberal people here who do not belong to any church; and then I find a number of Liberals belonging to Orthodox churches. I will subscribe for Mr. Savage's sermons, for I like his sermons best of all."

Miss Ellis numbered several physicians among her correspondents. One living in Alabama writes: —

"Your Conference speaks truly when it says, 'Many of Miss Ellis's correspondents had come to regard her as a dear friend, though never having seen her face.'

I feel that I too may have the privilege and the honor of being enrolled among the number of her unseen friends. I hope some of the good seed she sowed has fallen in good ground, even at this distance from the kind hand that scattered them, and that their fruit may not

> 'Appear in weeds that mar the land,
> But in a healthful store.'

I am a regular subscriber to the 'Christian Register' and the 'Unitarian,' all through the influence of Miss Ellis."

A man on a remote plantation in Georgia, who has been most zealous in spreading the new light around him, writes: —

"Please accept thanks for papers and memorial of Miss Sallie Ellis. She has been a good and a kind friend to me, has supplied me for over two years with the best of literature, something new, so different from what we are used to, something that lifts me above myself and gives me new views of heaven and immortality, makes me a better man to wife, family, neighbors, stock, and fills my heart with that new love, the divine brotherhood of all mankind. I deeply lament her loss. I do wish she could have lived a little while longer, for my sake. I do feel so thankful for the papers, and Channing, from Mrs. ——, God bless her! . . . Any books or papers sent me will be used to the good of the community. The Post Office Mission is doing a good work."

A young German in Tennessee to whom she sent much reading matter wrote her: —

"I am a German by birth, and received my education at German universities. I devoted many years to the study of the chief philosophical systems, and had in consequence of the results derived from the latter for a long time little or no connection with any church whatever. But during the last four or five years I became more and more convinced that no school of thought possesses so glorious a light as is emanating from the life and lessons of Jesus Christ. So when I became acquainted with Channing's Works, seeing that it is possible to reconcile with every scientific discovery and with every logical conclusion all that is special in Christianity, I knew I had found what I want and wherein to rest. From my own standpoint, and remembering the religious indifferentism which is now general in my native country and in France, I regard Unitarianism as the principle which is to save the Christian Church from ruin, and which will be an indestructible bulwark against Nihilism and materialism. I still believe there is a great future before the Unitarian Church."

From a lady in Alabama to Miss Ellis: —

Dear Friend, — For such you have been to me, and it is to you I am indebted for the papers, tracts, and sermons that I have received and enjoyed so much. I have derived genuine comfort from them,

and sincerely thank you for thinking of one so unhappy and so tossed about for a haven of rest. Truly yours is a heavenly mission, answering the needs of many like myself afflicted beyond human aid. The sermons of James Freeman Clarke are peculiarly comforting; and indeed I have read all you sent me with the deepest interest and benefit. How I wish I might in some way recompense your Society as it deserves! And you individually have my deepest gratitude, which is so little for such thoughtfulness as yours.

A second letter says: —

"Your papers, sermons, etc., are regularly received, and I wish I could make you understand the great comfort they are to me, particularly the sermons. Anything pertaining to the future life holds me spellbound till the last word is read. The Unitarian ideas and beliefs, so far as I know, find echo in my heart; and I always feel comforted and soothed, as it were, with all I have read and understood. I attend the Presbyterian Church here, because I think it is better to attend some church regularly; and I am very fond of this minister socially. There has been for ten days or more an evangelist holding a union meeting in our church, and a night or two ago I went to hear him. The only feeling excited in my heart was one of pity that all persons could not be taught the love of God instead of being frightened into a nervous fear. I assure you, I feel it a privilege to correspond

with you, and find myself wishing in my heart that you knew me thoroughly, what I have been, and what I am by nature, education, and social standing. I feel that we women of the South are to be seen at home and known to be understood by our Northern sisters."

The following are some of Miss Ellis's letters to a radical of the radicals, an old gentleman in Boston, one of Theodore Parker's old congregation, who sent much literature out under her direction, and contributed Theodore Parker's "Prayers," and his new volume of sermons, to her loan library.

JULY 2, 1883.

Your letter was received on Thursday, and, contrary to your expectation, was read with a great deal of interest, for I always admire to have every one speak with perfect freedom, and I am very glad you wrote as you did, and feel honored by having so old a man for a correspondent. . . . You and I won't quarrel on the Bible question. Rather think I should come up to your expectations on *that* point. . . . I do not consider Mr. C—— or Mr. S—— authority any more than I consider the Bible so; I read for myself and settle the question as best I can. Am I not right? I have not read Colenso on the Pentateuch, nor Davidson's "Introduction to the New Testament," but *have* read "Canon of the Bible," Knappert's "Religion of Israel," Stanley's "Eastern Church," Higginson's "Spirit of

the Bible," Dr. Noyes's Translation of Prophets, Psalms, Job, and Canticles, and lastly, "Bible for Learners." I merely mention these to let you see I have been a student of the Bible. Will also add Alger's "Future Life," J. F. Clarke's "Ten Great Religions" and "Thomas Didymus," Savage's "Talks about Jesus," and his sermons this winter on the Bible. . . . I think of heaven and hell as you do; but having always been fed on Unitarian teachings, am not so "bitter" in my feelings as those who have had the "Assembly's Shorter Catechism" to overcome. In short, if people only *live* truly from day to day, I will excuse their view of the Bible, and of God, and Christ, as long as they do not wish me to think the same as they do, for I decidedly think they are wrong. . . . I shall be very much pleased to have a copy of Theodore Parker's "Prayers," and shall gladly accept a copy for my circulating library; for, but with the exception of a few donations, the books loaned have been those I put in it.

After receiving the book, she wrote: —

"First, I must tell you how much I am enjoying Theodore Parker's 'Prayers.' They are suitable in most instances to the present day, and for all ages and times, and one rises from reading them with kindlier, broader thoughts, and renewed in strength. Am very glad to have the book. Shall endeavor to sell copies of it this winter. . . . I cannot *exactly* agree with all you said in your letter, for I think it is not necessary

yet to give up all theology, though it should not be the main thing in religion. The chief thing is to *do* right, and people arrive at that by different methods. They will inquire and discuss theology, and therefore it is necessary as yet that ministers should preach it, and I do not believe that Orthodox ministers have arrived at Mr. Savage's or Mr. Chadwick's views exactly, or they would come out and say so. As for myself, I still enjoy the Communion service, partaking of the bread and wine, and cannot agree to casting aside Jesus as a helper to a better life, though I neither worship him nor think that he redeems us in any other way than as by following his example we become one with him and God. He 'died for us' in no other sense than as a soldier dies for his country. Then let theology continue, for the world is fast becoming better and better in spite of it, and the time *may* come when we shall need it no longer. We are gradually coming to the point. I do not regret the time 'lost' I have spent on theology, for it has fitted me for just the work I am engaged in, and many are the questions I am called upon to answer, either by letter or printed matter; therefore I am glad to know where to send perplexed minds. As a friend wrote me from the South, 'Your papers are a great help to me. You are doing more good than the women did in the days of our Saviour. They clothed the body and you are feeding the souls.' Both acts are needed, but in different directions, and some people can better do the one, and others the other. I am cut off from active benevolence from want

of health for it, and am glad to know there are souls needing nourishment. Do you not take this view too? "

DECEMBER 20, 1883.

Your kind letter awaited my return from the city last evening, when I returned at ten. It grieved me to think that possibly I had wounded your feelings, for your "heresies" have not been "too tough" for me, as you fear. One's religious belief never troubles me as long as they do not force me into the same belief. Should be sorry if I had not "charity" enough to see the good in one, and not look at the outside merely. Your last letter reached me September 28, and I replied by postal October 19, as there did not appear to be anything especial to require a letter; and as my eyes were troubling me much at the time, I was compelled to desist from all but necessary letters. Am still as much interested in the good cause as ever, and we still have new applications constantly. We are gaining ground in the South. One gentleman in Alabama is much interested in Unitarianism, and wrote, asking me for Mr. Savage's address, whereupon he wrote to Mr. Savage himself, who is sending him "Unity Pulpit" present series. I am subscriber to it myself, and never can keep a sermon. I subscribed for the benefit of others. In Independence, Ky., a gentleman lately wrote, asking for Unitarian papers, etc. He is highly satisfied. Has been groping in the dark a long time, and wrote me, "When I read the pamphlet, 'What Do Unitarians Believe?' by C. W. Wendte, I shouted

'Eureka!' Like it so well that I shall not part with it." So it goes on all the time. Some one finds just what they have been in search of for some time.

February 19, 1885.

Am much obliged to you for sending matter to Mr. ——. He is extremely radical, a farmer, with a large family to educate, and cannot get such religious matter as he needs. You might, if you choose, send the Chadwick sermons to him too, or, if you prefer they should go elsewhere, address them to me, and I will send them where they are needed.

Her last postal card to this correspondent, dated about a month before her death, says:

"Thanks for the six 'Unity Pulpits' received. I have been too busy to reply before, and my health still feeble, though not confined to the house or bed at all. I'm not one of that kind until necessary."

Since her death, the farmer referred to above has written: —

"I want to pay my humble tribute to the departed Miss Ellis. I never met her; but she was my friend, because she was the friend to all struggling humanity. She sent me sermons, etc., but above all, *kind words*. I had pictured her in my mind as a strong, robust person, and hoped at some future time to meet her. I now fear that I may have wounded her refined soul by some things I wrote to her. I am somewhat

'agnostic;' but I love to think of heaven if such as Miss Ellis preside there and give tone to the surroundings."

The old gentleman in Boston wrote: —

"With this please receive eight letters and seventeen full postals from our dear departed friend, Miss Sarah Ellis, of your city, whose face I never saw, but whose correspondence was to me a great pleasure. Her personal friendship must have been a real blessing to you and her immediate friends. She was able to be a very active worker for the cause which lay so near her heart, and was at the same time so perfectly willing to let others believe what they can. I will send all I have of hers and let you select what you desire. There is not even a postal card among them on which there is not some small or large trace of her noble, generous, kindly nature."

A young man in Ohio, writing Miss Ellis about some revival scenes in his town, makes this comment, which is good and true enough to settle the "leaven" idea once for all.

"If you had seen all this as I have, you would hardly think it time for a civilized organization like the Unitarians to cease fighting the great evil and wait for the leaven to work.

"*The Unitarians are themselves a portion of the leaven, and unless they work there is so much of the leaven idle.*"

A Christian minister with whom Miss Ellis has corresponded two years or more, and who expects to enter Harvard Divinity School, in sending her letters writes: —

". . . I send such as I can get at, preferring to let you make any suitable selections or extracts they may offer. I shall be pleased to have them returned, as you mention, when you have used them. I may add that my correspondence with Miss Ellis on all matters connected with religion, Unitarianism, etc., was in all respects most pleasant, satisfactory, and profitable to me. The careful skill with which she divined the exact want of a correspondent and sent the appropriate word by tract or letter to supply it, bespoke a wisdom and experience deeper than casual letters may reveal. And continued correspondence served thus to inspire a greater esteem and confidence in the judgment expressed."

The following extracts are from her letters to this minister: —

NOVEMBER 12, 1883.

Your letter was received a week since, and read with interest. What you said of our teachings, of course, was right and just. We do not expect ministers of other denominations to accept our views altogether, for if so they would *be* Unitarians. Your view concerning studying the Bible agrees with mine. Still, it is well to know the latest view of the Bible, although we cannot accept the teaching at first. In

time the way is made clear to us. Have mailed to you to-day two more good tracts and our church programme for this year. After Wednesday will mail to you "Positive Aspects of Religion," by English leaders. We will agree to let you have any book at just what it costs us, you paying postage on it. . . . Theodore Parker's "Discourses Pertaining to Religion" is a good book for you to read, — usual price, $1.00. But first, "Orthodoxy; Its Truths and Errors," J. F. Clarke; and a new book just out, "Orthodoxy and Heresy." . . . "Bible for Learners" is by three German divines, translated by an Englishman, and gives the latest German views concerning the Bible.

DECEMBER 23, 1883.

. . . At the time your letter reached me we were holding our annual fair, and since then I have been much occupied with preparing for Christmas. To-day am home-bound by the snow, — it being knee-deep between our front door and the gate, and as I have to walk half a mile to take the street cars to the city, and as it is raining on top of the deep snow, concluded it was really too bad for me to venture. Have read myself out, and being very much occupied during the week, will take advantage of the holy-day to speak on a holy topic. You suggested that we send "papers representing Unitarian ideas rather than tracts;" but papers do not contain our doctrines so explicitly. Since your last letter, have mailed to you two tracts on "Inspiration" and "Incarnation" which

I thought well answered the thoughts expressed in your letter.

You will see from them that Unitarians are little troubled about Inspiration and the Divinity, or the Deity of Christ as we prefer to state it. We do believe in his divinity, for we hold that all men are divine, while we deny his being Deity. We lay greater stress on the divinity of human nature, and therefore we do not feel that Jesus is degraded by calling him man, for we exalt man. If we considered man totally depraved, then to call Jesus a mere man might seem to lower him; but when we think of the possibilities of man, and that he has it within himself to reach up to the highest manhood, and to become in a measure a saviour of the world, then to compare him with Jesus — the most glorious of men — is not lessening the divinity of the Christ, it seems to me. Or, if we held Jesus to be God, a being different from man, and so far superior to us that we never could attain to his goodness, then we never could compare the two. Jesus is an example to us because we also are divine as he is; for he prays "that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us." If man had not been of the same nature as himself, would he have thus spoken? I advise you to send to the Western Unitarian Sunday School Society for Rev. William C. Gannett's Sunday School Lesson, "The Christmas Poem and the Christmas Fact," if you wish to understand how Unitarians of the present day understand

Christ. Though you may not accept, you will have our idea of the birth legends in our Gospels.

DECEMBER 24, 1884.

My reply to your letter, by postal, was written before talking with – —. She tells me that Harvard will be decidedly the better place if not too expensive. Meadville has the advantage in that respect, – - less expensive ; but being near Boston, Cambridge offers better opportunities for students to engage in work by which they can support themselves in the mean time. A correspondent of ours went to Harvard a year ago last September. Had a scholarship promised him. He found a set of books to keep, and studied. . . . I tell you of this case, as it may help you in your decision. Meadville is very thorough, but think the younger men all give preference to Harvard ; I presume as much as anything on account of the opportunities which being near Boston affords them. I have written to Professor C. C. Everett of Harvard to please send you a catalogue and answer your inquiries. We shall be very glad if our little Cincinnati branch of the Women's Auxiliary Conference is the means of securing them another Divinity student. With many good wishes of the season from the Women's Auxiliary Conference,

Very truly yours, S. ELLIS.

JANUARY 14, 1885.

Have been obliged to change my residence, and, temporarily, am with another brother. Just came

here to-day, and, not having my things about me, have not your last letter to refer to, but having received a letter from our Harvard Divinity Student this past week, wish to tell you what he says of his surroundings, and his impression of Professor Everett. He writes as follows: "I enjoy the work of the Divinity School more than I had ever hoped. We have a noble corps of professors eminently fitted for their special departments, and personally most eminent examples of Nature's noblemen. In the light of what I am now learning, I consider my former ignorance phenomenal. Thanks to Professor Everett, my faith in God is clearer and stronger than ever before. He has enabled me to reduce my chaotic philosophy to something of a system, and has helped to furnish a steadfast basis for faith. His lectures are simply invaluable. To my mind he is not only the greatest man in the Divinity School, but the greatest man in Harvard University; and not only the profoundest thinker in the Unitarian Church in our country, but the profoundest thinker to be found in any American church." . . . I feel that this will be of interest to you, who are contemplating going to the Divinity School. There is another thing I wish to speak of; that is, we have quite a valuable book, "The Origin of the Doctrine of the Trinity," by Hugh H. Stannus, of England, showing how much greater cause there is for believing in the Unity of God than in the Trinity. You can have the book any time you wish, though I have just mailed it to a lady in this State. By the

way, the daughter of James F. Clarke, with others, has planned a course of "Unitarian Studies at Home." The first year's course includes: 1. "The Unitarian Doctrine of Prayer," by J. F. Clarke; 2. "The Origin of the Doctrine of the Trinity," by Stannus; 3. "Jesus and His Biographers," by Dr. W. H. Furness; 4. "Christ the Revealer," by Thom; 5. "Religious Duties," by Frances Power Cobbe. We have first, second, and fourth, — at least, are to have the latter. "Jesus and His Biographers" is out of print; but we are to have that loaned to us for two months, as three ladies here, with myself, are pursuing the course, and I have also induced a lady in this county to join us. We have received quite a number of encouraging letters from our correspondents lately, and have every reason to believe the Post Office Mission work is doing good. I mailed to you this week some arguments against the Trinity. Rev. C. W. Wendte's sermon, "Encouragement for Unitarians," in "Register," January 8, I read with much interest. We have such an interesting young convert, a Methodist, in Canada. His intention is to study for the Unitarian ministry, we having brought him out into the light. I thought with how much interest he would read that sermon of Mr. Wendte's.

April 19, 1885.

Was glad to hear from you again, and find you are in a larger field. [He had gone to a Pennsylvania city.] Perhaps you may draw into your church — take it for granted you have gone there to preach — Univer-

salists and Unitarians. . . . We shall be glad to loan you books again as soon as you are ready for them. Have had added to the library lately "The Origin of the Doctrine of the Trinity," by Hugh H. Stannus; "Christ the Revealer," by Thom (both English works), "The Power of the Spirit of Jesus of Nazareth" and "The Story of the Resurrection," both by Dr. W. H. Furness, of Philadelphia, — the latter just published, and he presented the two to us. Am not quite ready to loan the latter, as I 've not read it myself. If you know or meet with any Germans in your vicinity, we are soon to have some Unitarian tracts in the German language. . . . Hope you read with enthusiasm the earnest appeal for ministers at the East, and also at Meadville, in the "Register" of April 9. We hope to have two of our correspondents go to Meadville in September, and hope you may succeed in your desire to get to Harvard. We had a very pleasant letter from one of our "boys," as he styled himself, a week since. He is still enjoying his privileges there. . . . Hoping to hear from you again, and wishing you success in your new position, whatever it may be, in which the Women's Auxiliary Conference join,

Yours truly, SARAH ELLIS.

A gentleman in Mississippi, superintendent of schools in his county, writes of Miss Ellis as

"... One whose memorial I read with a saddened heart. A single request to her consequent upon an

advertisement which I saw in a paper commenced a correspondence which continued uninterruptedly till the time of her death. Though just from the side of a dear sister whom she had left destined to a glorious immortality, she found time to write to us a letter of condolence on the great loss that we had sustained in the death of our son, — a young man just of age, — in which she blended submission to Him 'who doeth all things right,' with such words of comfort as could emanate only from a good, earnest, self-sacrificing instrument of our Heavenly Father. Than in her life of trials and troubles there has never been a greater instance of the victory of mind over matter. I am afraid that I do little good with the sermons, etc., among the people here, who, although they use the beautiful hymn, 'Nearer, my God, to Thee,' at their funerals, still look upon Unitarians as cultured heathens."

A lady in Ohio, who became a regular correspondent and bought many books, wrote Miss Ellis: —

"The lectures and papers you have sent have been, and are, the source of much pleasure to me; and I have given them to some of my friends, who also seemed pleased with them. I had thought for a long time that the Unitarian faith would be my idea of true religion, and now I feel *sure* of it. I knew nothing about its creed, or whether it had one, but had had a desire for several years to know something of it. All

my friends and acquaintances were as ignorant as myself, and the most definite idea I had been able to gain concerning it was through James Freeman Clarke's 'Self-Culture.' When I found your little notice in the newspaper, it was just what I most desired. I have always wished to be religious; but there are things in the Bible which my reason repels, and the Orthodox way of teaching them became at last so abhorrent to me that at one time I just gave it all up and ceased to try to believe any of it; though I am sure I always felt the beauty of Christianity as taught by Christ, and would be glad now to be a Christian, if not compelled to believe him the miraculous Son of God. . . . We like the 'Register' better and better all the time, and I have no doubt shall subscribe for it regularly. I consider it exceedingly high-toned as a moral and religious teacher, and also in a literary point of view. The sermons and lectures supply for us a long-felt need. I intend sending a list of names of friends and acquaintances to the publishers soon. My sister-in-law has become a convert to the Unitarian faith through the medium of the 'Register' and the tracts you have sent me from time to time. She is quite an enthusiast, and feels that Unitarianism is a great boon and comfort to her now in the midst of her troubles. [The sister had recently lost her husband.] She, like myself, could not conscientiously subscribe to the old Orthodox creeds and requirements, and so remained outside the Church; but now she feels that she may be a Christian without stultify-

ing her sense of reason. When she returns home, she expects to subscribe for the 'Register.'"

After Miss Ellis's death she wrote: —

"I received the memorial of Miss Ellis. I thank you sincerely for sending it. It is very touching and beautiful, and delineates just such a character as I conceived hers to be. I had received the sad intelligence of her death through the 'Christian Register' before the memorial reached me, and it was like the shock of learning of the death of a personal friend. I have great reason to be grateful to her and to cherish her memory; for through her I have been led to embrace and to love the broad and charitable Unitarian belief. My reason had struggled for years against the great — to me — stumbling-blocks of Orthodoxy, and had finally abandoned the conflict and settled down into a kind of unthinking unbelief, feeling that it was no use to try to subscribe to any Orthodox creed, and not knowing where to look for any more hopeful, helpful, or reasonable spiritual aid. About four years ago, I think it was, I saw the notice in the paper which is referred to in the memorial, and Then ensued a very pleasant correspondence . . . wrote Miss Ellis asking for Unitarian papers, etc. much like that with a dear familiar friend, and she grew to be like one to me, or rather was that almost from the first. She put so much of her real self into her letters that they were like a living presence. So full she was of true Christian love and feeling, so

ever ready to forget her own sorrows and sufferings in her sympathy with the sorrows of others, that thus unconsciously truth and love and self-forgetfulness were stamped upon every line that came from her mind and hand. Truly she was 'A Little Pilgrim,' bearing good tidings to the fainting and weary, and lifting them up with her own heavenly strength. Sacred be her memory! Through her I became a subscriber to the 'Christian Register,' which is to me a standard of excellence in a religious, moral, and intellectual point of view. I do not want to be sectarian, as that is not my ideal of a good Unitarian, — I mean in an 'offensive' light; but it really seems to me that even Unitarian wit and fun have a refinement and exquisite touch of humor which cannot be equalled among Orthodox publications. The 'Register,' however, is the only Unitarian paper that I am well acquainted with. A widowed sister-in-law who is with me also became a Unitarian through Miss Ellis. She is a subscriber to 'The Unitarian.' We also have Channing's Works and the 'Oriental Christ,' which I bought through Miss Ellis, and some of Freeman Clarke's books; so that we have the companionship of much of the best Unitarian thought, although we are denied the privilege of a personal ministry."

From Springfield, Ohio: —

"I have been greatly benefited by the papers, sermons, etc., you have so kindly sent me. Hope to have them continued. Will try to have some Unitarian

volumes put in our public library. After reading the papers I loan them out to others. Some sermons thus pass into six or eight homes. They set people to thinking. I thank you, and your good Society, for the broad Christian education you are giving me. Will do all I can as your missionary here."

Rev. Samuel May, Leicester, Mass., having offered to send his "Register" to some one, Miss Ellis arranged that it should go to the writer of the above, who acknowledged it as follows: —

"Your postal received. I am very grateful for this kindness, and, as I read the 'Register' this morning, I resolved to use it for others also. . . . Can't your Association give the ball a push at this place?"

The following extract is from the first letter of a new correspondent, dated Dec. 8, 1885. To him was begun the last postal card, which she was unable to finish. She was so eager about it, dictating faster than one could write. "Tell him I think he will like us when he knows us better," she said.

"Your postal came all right, also copies of several tracts, and specimens of 'Register' and 'Unity.' They are mainly in lines of thought which I have been working on for some years. I am at one with the authors in main points, but not prepared to accept all

of the so-called advanced or radical expressions. My own experience, observation, and reflection seem to show that they have swung too far from Orthodoxy, and the truth lies between; but I am not fit to decide yet. From the pamphlet of selections of Channing's writings, with which I am particularly pleased, I have derived some ideas which inspire me for a greater activity, and I hope a more effective activity, in my work of teaching. . . . I have a friend who also feels dissatisfied with current Orthodoxy. If you see fit, I wish you to send him some of those tracts. I wish to use my copies here, or I would send them."

The estimation in which Miss Ellis was held by some of her fellow-workers appears in the following extracts from letters and papers.

At the conclusion of a letter, a part of which is given elsewhere, Rev. A. A. Livermore, President of Meadville Theological School, says: —

"But though disinterested and devoted to family interests and helpful to the growing households of her brothers and sisters, the crowning interest that came to absorb and inspire her advanced Christian life was the propagation of her own Unitarian faith, early learned, later disciplined, and mellowed and sanctified by trial and years. What had been a stay and staff to her own mind and heart she was anxious to communicate to others. Hence she sought the instrumentalities of the pen and press, and the Post Office Mission sprang

into being, — the invention of a Christian woman's heart, bent on doing good spiritually. The zeal, fidelity, sympathy, and adaptation with which she developed and pursued this work have been told elsewhere. It is another lesson to teach us that ever new means will arise, as time and opportunity serve, for the faithful in heart and life to hasten the coming of the Master's kingdom of righteousness and love. Miss Ellis infused a sweetness and sympathy all her own into her mission. To her it was no task, but a delight, as her letters show, — her meat and drink to help struggling souls to light and Christian faith. Peace to her beautiful and saintly memory! "

(From Rev. S. J. Barrows, editor " Christian Register.")

A CANDLE OF THE LORD.

It was a feeble socket that held it. It was a constant surprise that so small a candle could give forth so much light. But its special mission was not so much to illumine the world with its own light as it was to ignite other minds and hearts from its own flame. "Behold how much wood is kindled by how small a fire!" says the apostle. Nothing is small, it has been said, which is great in its consequences. It does not need a stroke of lightning from heaven to raze Chicago to the ground: a little lamp-flame near a pile of hay is sufficient. We forget sometimes the power of a single humble life to extend and duplicate its influence. We have never learned yet how far the little

candle can throw its beams, when its waves of light and heat come in contact with minds and hearts that are prepared for the illumination it may give. The wire and the battery have not entirely superseded the torch-bearer. The lamps in the house may have been filled, the gas may be ready to turn on; what is needed is for some one to go about with match or torch or candle, and tip the burner with its flame.

So, as we have said, it was the mission of this candle of the Lord to ignite other minds and hearts. She had discovered that the vast system of intercommunication established by the post-office might be used for moral as well as for commercial means. In connection with a faithful co-worker, she devoted herself to the dissemination of kindling literature. Set like a luminous panel amid a great wall of advertisements was a brief notice, in some of the large Western dailies, that those who wished Liberal religious literature might have it for the asking, and by sending to the Cincinnati Post Office Mission. In the columns of this paper, from time to time, we have shown what a wide-spread influence these little notices had. They opened avenues of communication to many hungry souls. The confidence of many in doubt and perplexity was secured. The lady who was called to this special work had a keen intuition as to what was needed in each special case. It was not only that she sent the right tracts and the right books, and thus set up guide-posts for groping men and women; not less prized by many of her correspondents was the simple, earnest faith and

cordial sympathy which she expressed in her own letters. Many are grateful to her for pointing out the way and giving the right impulse at the right time. Prevented by deafness from taking an active part in social intercourse, she yet found an opportunity to unstop the deaf ears of others and to open their blind eyes. In this Post Office Mission work was a channel for her faithful and consecrated endeavors.

We cannot estimate the radiating influence of such a life. Its quickening flame has gone from heart to heart, and it is destined to go still further. Her devoted example has given an impulse to many other women in the Unitarian body, who are sowing in the same field the seed for an abundant harvest. It is now seen that this diffusion of our literature is one of the mightiest means for propagating our faith. If such a devoted woman, working independently, could accomplish so much, how much more might be effected by thorough organizations and wide co-operation for the same purpose!

Her best monument will be the prosecution and extension of the work to which she gave her life. It was but a pair of lines in the "Deaths" of the last week's "Register" which told that the candle had gone out, but its flame is still propagated in the lives it has served to kindle. The great work of her life was done far beyond the circle of her immediate influence; and there are many who have never seen her in the flesh, who will still feel that the name of Sarah Ellis represents an abiding spiritual reality.

(From Rev. George A. Thayer in "Unity," Jan. 23, 1886.)

SARAH ELLIS.

Sarah Ellis, the faithful organizer of the Cincinnati Post Office Mission, and the pioneer in that admirable form of the ministry of Unitarian doctrine through the writing of letters and the circulation of religious literature, "went up higher" from her sick-bed, on Sunday evening, December 27. There are many, East and West, to whom her wise guidance in spiritual perplexities has been as a strong hand lifting them from confusion and doubt concerning all religion, into tranquil joy, who will read that she is dead, with the shock which comes with an unforewarned calamity. For almost up to her last hour she was carrying on her correspondence with the wide circle of men and women to whom she periodically sent glad tidings of a reasonable faith, and never giving intimation to the most regular of these correspondents that she was any less vigorous of health than usual. For many months her friends had seen the end approaching, and very likely she herself had understood that "the task was great, the day short, and it was not incumbent upon her to complete the work." But her inexorable conscience, blended with her delight in having found at last, within this recent five years, a work needing to be done, and calling into use her store of admirable wisdom for such business, kept her at her duty until the body ceased to obey the will.

Only the people who knew Miss Ellis well could understand her rare fitness for her office, through long and ripe study of Unitarian religious literature, and through her genius for apprehending at once what special reading and counsel her various applicants for light upon their darkened ways of the spirit needed to receive, — only those to whom she spoke the word in season, or those nearer home to whom she was a quiet exemplar in holy things, can appreciate the quality of virtue enclosed in that fragile and infirm body, which shines on earth only "in minds made better by its presence," but shines with renewed honor elsewhere in the house of many mansions.

It was not my good fortune to know Miss Ellis personally, but her works have praised her East as well as West. Her death is a great calamity to the cause, as well as a great sorrow to her friends; but she has put life and power into a good instrument of influence, and it will live.

REV. GRINDALL REYNOLDS,
Secretary American Unitarian Association, Boston, Mass.

LEICESTER, MASS, April 10, 1886.

. . . Her communications made no mention of her infirmities or illness; and her death was a great surprise. I had become quite interested in her manner of doing her work; the perfect intelligence, good sense, and self-reliance she manifested. —— —— of Springfield, Ohio, has written to me in the highest appreciation of her helpfulness to him. . . . I enclose

three of her postal cards, which, if quite convenient, may come back to me. [On one of the sepostal cards Mr. May has indorsed, "Miss Ellis lived but about a month after this was written. Her death was a great and immediate loss to the cause of a wise and large Christian faith in the West."] She was eminently worthy of a special commemoration and canonization.

Respectfully yours, SAMUEL J. MAY.

I have thought of you often since the "Christian Register" brought the news of Miss Ellis's death, and am moved to express my sympathy for the loss you have met, — a loss which all of us share indeed. I suppose it was very good to *her* to be summoned from a state of feebleness; but it will not be easy, I believe, to fill the vacant place. Perhaps her own inspiration will rest upon her successor, and so she will indeed help to carry on the work which she has done so beautifully.

I suppose the time will come, some day, when the loss of a good worker in our Conference will not be felt so seriously as now; but we are far too few as yet.

MISS ABBY W. MAY,

President Women's Auxiliary Conference, Boston, Mass.

Though I had had but comparatively little correspondence with Miss Ellis, that little had made me regard her as a personal friend, and I felt especially drawn towards her after I learned about her deafness, for *that* was my own mother's trial for many years. It is a comfort to think that all suffering and weak-

ness are over for her ; and so we can but rejoice that she has entered upon the blessed life, although the feeling of loss must be very great. I have thought often of Mr. Beach's sudden death last summer, during the last few weeks, and I was glad to tell our friends, at the meeting the other day, of Miss Ellis's tender, helping sympathy for his mother and sisters at that time. I think one can hardly help feeling that perhaps Miss Ellis and the young friend whom she had led to a bright and happy faith may already have met and rejoiced together in the heavenly life. Much sympathy has been expressed here for Miss Ellis's father. I hope that the thought of all that she has gained is a constant comfort and help to him.

MRS. J. I. W. THACHER,
Secretary Women's Auxiliary Conference, Boston, Mass.

The news of Miss Ellis's departure from among us filled us all with grief and regret; and yet we feel she is so sure to continue her good work there, that we ought not to *regret*. What a delightful awakening for her when, with no feeling of weakness or pain, she opens her eyes to find herself surrounded by those who have gone before, whose lives she had gladdened here, and to learn that part of her mission there is to meet and welcome her host of friends, personal and parochial, as they follow her over there! How many people will miss her here! Ten times one is ten. Their number cannot be estimated.

MISS F. LE BARON,
Sec. Western Women's Unitarian Conf., Chicago, Ill.

I want to express my great sympathy for you and your Society in the loss of your friend Miss Ellis.

Although I knew she had been an invalid for a long time, the news of her death was a great shock to me. She has been so kind in helping me to get started in the Post Office Mission, and made me feel so truly that she stood ready to help always, that I cannot but feel that I have in her death lost a good friend, which must be the case with many others all over the country. She has left us all the memory of a brave example, which ought to fill us with the desire to carry on the good work by her begun, more faithfully than ever.

MISS ELLEN M. GOULD,
Sec. Post Office Mission Committee, Davenport, Ia.

I have just heard of the death of Miss Ellis. How great a loss it is to all of us, but how great a *gain* to all of us that she has lived, and illustrated the possibilities of a life lived under even so many limitations as hedged her about! Will you not send me a sketch of her life and work for the next number of the "Unitarian"?

MISS ELIZA R. SUNDERLAND,
Assistant Editor "Unitarian," Chicago, Ill.

I had heard from time to time that she was feeble, but her fragile frame held so strong a spirit, that I hoped she would triumph over bodily weakness for many years to come. The world can ill spare such as she. Each time I saw her I was impressed more and more with the strength of her character and the

clearness and directness of her mind. Upon meeting a stranger of whom one has heard much there is almost always a little period of bewilderment before the ideal and real can be harmonized, even where there is not disappointment; and at first I was at a loss how to reconcile the strong, well-balanced mind, with its keen insight, — as revealed in her letters, — with the delicate, dainty, sweet-looking little woman, shut out from her kind to so great a degree by her affliction. Yet when her tiny hand grasped mine so firmly at our first meeting, there was that in the clasp that reconciled and united my ideal with the actual; they were only two sides of the same nature. She was so strong, too, in being so genuine and so full of faith. In these halting, doubting times, a faith in the eternal verities so strong and unwavering as hers is like a rock to many a tossed and uncertain soul. Such people do not know their own power of helping. I can never refrain from questioning *why* those who are so needed in the world must be taken, when the useless and worthless are left, unless it is that they go that they may leave the *spirit* of their service to do a larger work as a heritage to all who will accept it. Though dead, they speak with many tongues.

Miss Frances L. Roberts,
Ex-Sec. Western Women's Unitarian Conf., Chicago, Ill.

A Union Meeting of the Women's Auxiliary Conference for Suffolk County, which includes all the branches of the Conference in the Unitarian churches

of Boston, was held at Arlington Street Church on Thursday, Jan. 21, 1886.

At this meeting was officially announced, with the most profound regret, the death of Miss Ellis, of Cincinnati. A brief account of her life in connection with the work of the Conference was given by Mrs. J. I. W. Thacher, Mrs. Kate Gannett Wells, and Miss Abby W. May, and it was unanimously agreed that there should be entered on the records of the meeting, and transmitted to the friends of Miss Ellis, an expression of our fullest appreciation of her beautiful and self-sacrificing character, our high estimation of the work in which she had already accomplished so much, and our deep and earnest sympathy for those who have suffered an irreparable loss. Our sorrow is not without the hope that the tender memory of a life so pure and unselfish, and such earnest devotion to all the principles of our religious faith, may influence for good the lives of each and all of us, and prove an incentive to every member of our Conference to further activity in the work we are trying to do.

EMILY A. FIFIELD, *Director.*

For the Suffolk County Branches of the Women's Auxiliary Conference.

PORTLAND, ME., Jan. 17, 1886.

MRS. FAYETTE SMITH, Director of Women's Conference:

At a recent meeting of the Portland branch of the Women's Auxiliary Conference, an article in the "Christian Register," entitled "A Candle of the

Lord," was read; and on motion of Mrs. Dr. J. T. Gilman, the Secretary was requested to express to your Conference the sympathy of our little band in the death of Miss Sarah Ellis. While we cannot have the sense of personal loss that you feel in the extinguishment of that light, we have the highest admiration for the work she accomplished under such limitations, and trust that her example will be an incentive to every Unitarian woman to do something to continue it, till the flame she kindled may become a glorious light, glowing in every hamlet of our common country. Very truly,

MARY R. MCINTIRE.

TO THE WOMEN'S CONFERENCE, CINCINNATI, OHIO.

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57 HAWLEY ST., SYRACUSE, N.Y., Feb. 7, 1886.

DEAR MRS. SMITH, — As I have had the pleasure of a little correspondence with dear Miss Ellis, our Society have asked me to express to you our deep sympathy in your loss. She must have been a remarkable woman to have accomplished so much when so feeble. Her warm heart spoke plainly in her letters, and we shall regret more and more, as time passes, that we shall receive them no more. Let us believe that her freed spirit is not far off, but is still interested, and far more able to help in the work she loved

so well. Her sphere is only larger. Our branch of the Woman's Auxiliary Conference resolved to incorporate in its minutes a resolution of regret at her death, and sympathy with you, and to preserve the "In Memoriam" you so kindly sent, among its papers. Please accept our warmest sympathy and expression of interest. Yours sincerely,

FRANCES J. MYERS.

For the Syracuse Branch of the Women's Auxiliary Conference.

The Post Office Mission Committee at Davenport, Iowa, at their meeting Feb. 10, also took formal action upon the death of Miss Ellis, and sent expressions of "heartfelt regrets and sympathy" to the Cincinnati Society.

CHICAGO, March 29, 1886.

A part of Thursday afternoon, May 13, will be given to the Women's Conference, and occupied with election of officers and report of Post Office Mission work. It seems very appropriate that something should be said at that time in memory of Miss Ellis; and Miss Le Baron and I request that you prepare the paper or remarks and present them. . . . We leave the form of the memorial entirely to your judgment.

MRS. E. A. WEST,

Pres. Western Women's Unitarian Conf., Chicago, Ill.

In accordance with this request, Mrs. George Thornton, of Cincinnati, read the following memorial before the Western Women's Unitarian Conference, May 13, 1886: —

Such an occasion as this, full of words of good counsel and cheer, — a reunion of the little band of women workers in the cause of Liberal Christianity, — will be incomplete if we do not mention one name, held in loving remembrance in the hearts of many here present, and of a still greater number scattered far and wide, whose lives have been touched to higher issues by the active ministrations of our beloved co-worker, Miss Sallie Ellis, who has laid down her work on earth and passed on to the great Hereafter.

When we recall the fragile form, so full of the Spirit's life, which, rising above the many disabilities of physical suffering, accomplished so much in the brief years allotted her, we take courage, and thank God that we have had such spirits with us. Nothing doubting that their work continues here and elsewhere, though we know neither the manner nor conditions of its progress.

We who are cheered in moments of sorrow by the great faith that the future of those who have passed behind "the veil which hath no outward swing" will be but a continuance of the *best*, under nobler conditions, rejoice, even in the midst of personal bereavement, that Miss Ellis has entered into that rest, so nobly

won by her patient endurance of the heavy burdens laid upon her, — burdens which yet never seemed to close her sympathy for others, but only served to quicken her eagerness to work for the extension of that vital faith she found so satisfying.

It is to her warm heart, and earnest desire to help others in the midst of spiritual difficulties, that we owe the unique but most efficacious method of reaching such through the medium of postal communication.

Scientists tell us that each wavelet of sound, produced by the tiniest cause, goes on in ever-widening circles of ether, to the uttermost limits of creation. Had we but senses acute enough to receive the sensation, how full of pulsing sound would all Nature become! It seems to me that this keener sense, enabling her to catch the questionings of troubled souls, became one of the great compensations of Miss Ellis's later years. As the outer organs of hearing became dulled to what was passing around her, the inner or spiritual became more observant; and as we listened to the correspondence which came to her from North and South, East and West, from the home and the camp, from the teacher and the taught, we seemed to stand in some great whispering-gallery, echoing with the sighs and anxious inquiries of seekers after truth who sought aid in solving the great problems of the soul's life. As from time to time came back acknowledgments of gratitude for aid rendered, either by her sympathizing letters or the Liberal litera-

ture which she widely disseminated, we realized what a great lever had been applied in this simple way to the spiritual needs of many.

It is in this phase of Miss Ellis's work that she has become better known to the members of the Women's Auxiliary Conference; and it is of this especially I have spoken to-day.

But the roots of this activity lie deeper, and this work was but the fruitage of a life which drew its strength to suffer and endure, as well as to labor and to wait, from those fountains of a rational faith for whose extension we have met here this week.

To her it was the manna of life, and it was fitting that her last years should have been spent in unselfish endeavor to extend its influence.

Knowing how heartily she would have entered into the spirit of our meetings during this Conference, we cannot leave unsaid the word of tender remembrance which links her memory indissolubly with the work of our Women's Auxiliary Conference. The little band who are engaged in spreading the light of a higher faith, in lifting the load of crude ideas in regard to our relations to God and humanity, may surely feel that though our friend "has joined the choir invisible," yet her work "lives on in lives made better by her presence," still keeping alive the union with us who remain behind, — a help and incentive to continued progress.

No better key-note of Miss Ellis's life can be given than in the words of a poem copied by her into

her diary, January, 1881. It was taken from the "Woman's Journal," and was entitled: —

ACHIEVEMENT.

Nothing noble, nothing great
The world has ever known,
But began a seed of thought
In some generous nature sown.

Any soul may rise to be
A new saviour to its race;
Every man and woman fills,
Well or ill, a prophet's place.

In our Now the Then lies folded,
All its wealth, and all its power;
From the promise of to-day
Bursts to-morrow's perfect flower.

Every deed of solid worth
Helps the world to find its place;
Every life of homely truth
Raises higher all the race.

"Ye are gods," the Scriptures saith;
"Yea," our spirits make reply;
Let us claim our birthright, then, —
Prove our high divinity.

We too may be, if we will,
Athlete winners every one,
Conquerors of fate and chance,
Lords of all beneath the sun.

Let us thitherward aspire,
Take whate'er we find to do,
Making life what life was meant —
Something liberal, earnest, true!

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